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THE HISTORY OF AMERICA.

VOL. I.

THE HISTORY OF AMERICA.

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VOLUME THE FIRST.

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PREFACE.

IN fulfilling the engagement which I had come under to the Public with reſpect to the Hiſtory of America, it was my intention not to have publiſhed any part of it until the whole was completed. The preſent ſtate of the Britiſh Colonies has induced me to alter that reſolution. While they are engaged in civil war with Great Britain, inquiries and ſpeculations concerning their ancient forms of policy and laws, which exiſt no longer, cannot be intereſting. The attention and expectation of mankind are now turned towards their future condition. In whatever manner this unhappy conteſt may terminate, a new order of things muſt ariſe in North America, and its affairs will aſſume another aſpect. I wait, with the ſolicitude of a good citizen, until the ferment ſubſide, and regular government be re-eſtabliſhed, and then I ſhall return to this part of my work, in which I had made ſome progreſs. That, together with the hiſtory

hiſtory of Portugueſe America, and of the ſettlements made by the ſeveral nations of Europe in the Weſt India iſlands will complete my plan.

THE two volumes which I now publiſh, contain an account of the diſcovery of the New World, and of the progreſs of the Spaniſh arms and colonies there. This is not only the moſt ſplendid portion of the American ſtory, but ſo much detached, that it forms a perfect whole by itſelf, remarkable for the unity of the ſubject. As the principles and maxims of the Spaniards in planting colonies, which have been adopted in ſome meaſure by every nation in Europe, are unfolded in this part of my work; it will ſerve as a proper introduction to the hiſtory of their eſtabliſhment in America, and convey ſuch information concerning this important article of policy, as may be deemed no leſs intereſting than curious.

IN deſcribing the atchievements and inſtitutions of the Spaniards in the New World, I have departed in many inſtances from the accounts of preceding hiſtorians, and have often related facts which ſeem to have been unknown to them. It is a duty I owe the Public, to mention the ſources from which I have derived ſuch intelligence,

gence, as juſtifies me either in placing tranſactions in a new light, or in forming any new opinion with reſpect to their cauſes and effects. This duty I perform with greater ſatisfaction, as it will afford an opportunity of expreſſing my gratitude to thoſe benefactors, who have honoured me with their countenance and aid in my reſearches.

As it was from Spain that I had to expect the moſt important information, with regard to this part of my work, I conſidered it as a very fortunate circumſtance for me, when Lord Grantham, to whom I had the honour of being perſonally known, and with whoſe liberality of ſentiment, and diſpoſition to oblige, I was well acquainted, was appointed ambaſſador to the court of Madrid. Upon applying to him, I met with ſuch a reception as ſatisfied me, that his endeavours would be employed in the moſt proper manner, in order to obtain the gratification of my wiſhes; and I am perfectly ſenſible, that what progreſs I have made in my inquiries among the Spaniards, ought to be aſcribed chiefly to their knowing how much his Lordſhip intereſted himſelf in their ſucceſs.

But did I owe nothing more to Lord Grantham, than his attention in engaging Mr. Waddilove, the chaplain of his embaſſy,

baſſy, to take the conduct of my affairs in Spain, the obligations I lie under would be very great. During five years, that gentleman has carried on reſearches for my behoof, with ſuch activity, perſeverance, and knowledge of the ſubject, to which his attention was turned, as have filled me with no leſs aſtoniſhment, than ſatisfaction. He procured for me the greater part of the Spaniſh books, which I have conſulted; and as many of them were printed early in the ſixteenth century, and are become extremely rare, the collecting of theſe was ſuch an occupation, as, alone, required much time and aſſiduity. To his friendly attention I am indebted for copies of ſeveral valuable manuſcripts, containing facts and details which I might have ſearched for in vain, in works that have been made public. Encouraged by the inviting good-will with which Mr. Waddilove conferred his favours, I tranſmitted to him a ſet of queries, with reſpect both to the cuſtoms and policy of the native Americans, and the nature of ſeveral inſtitutions in the Spaniſh ſettlements, framed in ſuch a manner, that a Spaniard might anſwer them, without diſcloſing any thing that was improper to be communicated to a foreigner. He tranſlated theſe into Spaniſh and obtained from various perſons who had reſided in moſt of the Spaniſh colonies, ſuch replies as have afforded me much inſtruction.

Nor-

NOTWITHSTANDING theſe peculiar advantages with which my inquiries were carried on in Spain, it is with regret I am obliged to add, that the ſucceſs with which they have been attended, muſt be aſcribed to the beneficence of individuals, not to any communication by public authority. By a ſingular arrangement of Philip II. the records of the Spaniſh monarchy, are depoſited in the *Archivo* of Simancas, near Valladolid, at the diſtance of a hundred and twenty miles from the ſeat of government, and the ſupreme courts of juſtice. The papers relative to America, and chiefly to that early period of its hiſtory, towards which my attention was directed, are ſo numerous, that they alone, according to one account, fill the largeſt apartment in the Archivo; and according to another, they compoſe eight hundred and ſeventy-three large bundles. Conſcious of poſſeſſing, in ſome degree, the induſtry which belongs to an hiſtorian, the proſpect of ſuch a treaſure excited my moſt ardent curioſity. But the proſpect of it, only, is all that I have enjoyed. Spain, with an exceſs of caution, has uniformly thrown a veil over her tranſactions in America. From ſtrangers they are concealed with peculiar ſolicitude. Even to her own ſubjects the Archivo of Simancas is not opened without a particular order from the crown; and after obtaining that, papers cannot be copied, without paying fees of

office ſo exorbitant, that the expence exceeds what it would be proper to beſtow, when the gratification of literary curioſity is the only object. It is to he hoped, that the Spaniards will at laſt diſcover this ſyſtem of concealment to be no leſs impolitic than illiberal. From what I have experienced in the courſe of my inquiries, I am ſatisfied, that upon a more minute ſcrutiny into their early operations in the New World, however reprehenſible the actions of individuals may appear, the conduct of the nation will be placed in a more favourable light.

In other parts of Europe very different ſentiments prevail. Having ſearched, without ſucceſs, in Spain, for a letter of Cortes to Charles V. written ſoon after he landed in the Mexican empire, which has not hitherto been publiſhed; it occurred to me, that as the emperor was ſetting out for Germany, at the time when the meſſengers from Cortes arrived in Europe, the letter with which they were intruſted might poſſibly be preſerved in the Imperial Library of Vienna. I communicated this idea to Sir Robert Murray Keith, with whom I have long had the honour to live in friendſhip, and I had ſoon the pleaſure to learn, that, upon his application, her Imperial Majeſty had been graciouſly pleaſed to iſſue an order, that not only a copy of that letter

letter (if it were found), but of any other papers in the library, which could throw light upon the Hiſtory of America, ſhould be tranſmitted to me. The letter from Cortes is not in the Imperial Library, but an authentic copy, atteſted by a notary, of that written by the magiſtrates of the colony planted by him at Vera Cruz, which I have mentioned, Vol. ii. p. 32, having been found; it was tranſcribed and ſent to me. This, no leſs curious, and as little known as the letter which was the object of my inquiries, did not come to my hand till that part of the hiſtory to which it relates was printed; but I have given ſome account of what is moſt worthy of notice in it, at the end of Notes and Illuſtrations, vol. ii. Together with it, I received a copy of a letter from Cortes, containing a long account of his expedition to Honduras, with reſpect to which, I did not think it neceſſary to enter into any particular detail; and likewiſe thoſe curious Mexican paintings, which I have deſcribed, vol. ii. p. 284, &c.

My inquiries at St. Peterſburgh were carried on with equal facility and ſucceſs. In examining into the neareſt communication between our continent and that of America, it became of conſequence to obtain authentic information concerning the diſcoveries of

the Ruſſians, in their navigation from Kamchatka towards the coaſt of America. Accurate relations of their firſt voyage, in 1741, have been publiſhed by Muller and Gmelin. Several foreign authors have entertained an opinion, that the court of Ruſſia ſtudiouſly conceals the progreſs which has been made by more recent navigators, and ſuffers the Public to be amuſed with falſe accounts of their route. Such conduct appeared to me unſuitable to thoſe liberal ſentiments, and that patronage of ſcience, for which the preſent ſovereign of Ruſſia is eminent; nor could I diſcern any political reaſon, that might render it improper to apply for information concerning the late attempts of the Ruſſians to open a communication between Aſia and America. My ingenious countryman, Dr. Rogerſon, firſt phyſician to the Empreſs, preſented my requeſt to her Imperial Majeſty, who not only diſclaimed any idea of concealment, but inſtantly ordered the journal of Captain Krenitzin, who conducted the only voyage of diſcovery made by public authority ſince the year 1741, to be tranſlated, and his original chart to be copied for my uſe. By conſulting them I have been enabled to give a more accurate view of the progreſs and extent of the Ruſſian diſcoveries, than has hitherto been communicated to the Public.

FROM other quarters I have received information of great utility and importance. M. Chevalier de le Pinto, the miniſter from Portugal to the court of Great Britain, who commanded for ſeveral years at Matagroſſa, a ſettlement of the Portugueſe in the interior part of Braſil, where the Indians are numerous, and their original manners little altered by intercourſe with Europeans, was pleaſed to ſend me very full anſwers to ſome queries concerning the character and inſtitutions of the natives of America, which his polite reception of an application made to him in my name, encouraged me to propoſe. Theſe ſatisfied me, that he had contemplated with diſcerning attention the curious objects which his ſituation preſented to his view, and I have often followed him as one of my beſt inſtructed guides.

M. SUARD, to whoſe elegant tranſlation of the Hiſtory of the Reign of Charles V. I owe the favourable reception of that work on the continent, procured me anſwers to the ſame queries from M. de Bougainville, who had opportunities of obſerving the Indians both of North and South America, and from M. Godin le Jeune, who reſided fifteen years among Indians in Quito, and twenty years in Cayenne. The latter are more valuable from having been examined by M. de la Condamine, who, a few weeks before

before his death, made ſome ſhort additions to them, which may be conſidered as the laſt effort of that attention to ſcience which occupied a long life.

My inquiries were not confined to one region in America. Governor Hutchinſon took the trouble of recommending the conſideration of my queries to Mr. Hawley and Mr. Brainerd, two proteſtant miſſionaries, employed among the Indians of the Five Nations, who favoured me with anſwers, which diſcover a conſiderable knowledge of the people whoſe cuſtoms they deſcribe. From William Smith, Eſq; the ingenious hiſtorian of New York, I received ſome uſeful information. When I enter upon the Hiſtory of our Colonies in North America, I ſhall have occaſion to acknowledge how much I have been indebted to many other gentlemen of that country.

From the valuable Collection of Voyages made by Alexander Dalrymple, Eſq; with whoſe attention to the Hiſtory of Navigation and Diſcovery the Public is well acquainted, I have received ſome very rare books, particularly two large volumes of Memorials, partly manuſcript, and partly in print, which were preſented to the court of Spain during the reigns of Philip III.

and

and Philip IV. From theſe I have learned many curious particulars with reſpect to the interior ſtate of the Spaniſh colonies, and the various ſchemes formed for their improvement. As this Collection of Memorials formerly belonged to the Colbert Library, I have quoted them by that title.

ALL thoſe books and manuſcripts I have conſulted with that attention, which the reſpect due from an Author to the Public required; and by minute references to them, I have endeavoured to authenticate whatever I relate. The longer I reflect on the nature of hiſtorical compoſition, the more I am convinced that this ſcrupulous accuracy is neceſſary. The hiſtorian who records the events of his own time, is credited in proportion to the opinion which the Public entertains with reſpect to his means of information and his veracity. He who delineates the tranſactions of a remote period, has no title to claim aſſent, unleſs he produces evidence in proof of his aſſertions. Without this, he may write an amuſing tale, but cannot be ſaid to have compoſed an authentic hiſtory. In thoſe ſentiments I have been confirmed by the opinion of an author *, whom his induſtry, erudition, and

* Mr. Gibbon.

diſcernment,

diſcernment, have deſervedly placed in a high rank among the moſt eminent hiſtorians of the age. Emboldened by a hint from him, I have publiſhed a catalogue of the Spaniſh books which I have conſulted. This practice was frequent in the laſt century and conſidered as an evidence of laudable induſtry in an author; in the preſent, it may, perhaps, be deemed the effect of oſtentation; but as many of theſe books are unknown in Great Britain, I could not otherwiſe have referred to them as authorities, without encumbering the page with an inſertion of their full titles. To any perſon who may chuſe to follow me in this path of inquiry, the catalogue muſt be very uſeful.

My readers will obſerve, that in mentioning ſums of money, I have uniformly followed the Spaniſh method of computing by *peſos*. In America, the peſo *fuerte*, or *duro*, is the only one known, and that is always meant when any ſum imported from America is mentioned. The peſo fuerte, as well as other coins, has varied in its numerary value, but I have been adviſed, without attending to ſuch minute variations, to conſider it as equal to four ſhillings and ſix pence of our money. It is to be remembered, however, that in the ſixteenth century, the effective

effective value of a peſo, i. e. the quantity of labour which is repreſented, or of goods which it would purchaſe, was five or ſix times as much as at preſent.

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THE

THE

HISTORY

OF

AMERICA.

BOOK I.

THE progreſs of men in diſcovering and peopling the various parts of the earth, has been extremely ſlow. Several ages elapſed before they removed far from thoſe mild and fertile regions where they were originally placed by their Creator. The occaſion of their firſt general diſperſion is known; but we are unacquainted with the courſe of their migrations, or the time when they took poſſeſſion of the different countries which they now inhabit. Neither hiſtory nor tradition furniſh ſuch information concerning thoſe remote events, as enables us to trace, with any certainty, the operations of the human race in the infancy of ſociety.

BOOK I.

The earth ſlowly peopled.

WE may conclude, however, that all the early migrations of mankind were made by land. The ocean, which every where ſurrounds the habitable earth, as well as the various arms of the ſea which ſeparate one region from another, though

Firſt migrations by land.

BOOK I.

deſtined to facilitate the communication between diſtant countries, ſeem at firſt, to be formed to check the progreſs of man, and to mark the bounds of that portion of the globe to which nature had confined him. It was long, we may believe, before men attempted to paſs this formidable barrier, and became ſo ſkilful and adventurous as to commit themſelves to the mercy of the winds and waves, or to quit their native ſhore in queſt of remote and unknown regions.

First attempts towards navigation.

NAVIGATION and ſhip-building are arts ſo nice and complicated, that they require the ingenuity, as well as experience of many ſucceſſive ages to bring them to any degree of perfection. From the raft or canoe, which firſt ſerved to carry a ſavage over the river that obſtructed him in the chace, to the conſtruction of a veſſel capable of conveying a numerous crew with ſafety to a diſtant coaſt, the progreſs in improvement is immenſe. Many efforts would be made, many experiments would be tried, and much labour and invention would be employed, before men could accompliſh this arduous and important undertaking. The rude and imperfect ſtate in which navigation is ſtill found among all nations which are not conſiderably civilized, correſponds with this account of its progreſs, and demonſtrates that, in early times, the art was not ſo far improved as to enable men to undertake diſtant voyages, or to attempt remote diſcoveries.

Introduction of commerce.

As ſoon, however, as the art of navigation became known, a new ſpecies of correſpondence among men took place. It is from this æra, that we muſt date the commencement of ſuch an intercourſe between nations as deſerves the appellation of commerce. Men are, indeed, far advanced in improvement before commerce

commerce becomes an object of great importance to them. They must even have made some considerable progress towards civilization, before they acquire the idea of property, and ascertain it so perfectly, as to be acquainted with the most simple of all contracts, that of exchanging by barter one rude commodity for another. But as soon as this important right is established, and every individual feels that he has an exclusive title to possess or to alienate whatever he has acquired by his own labour and dexterity, the wants and ingenuity of his nature suggest to him a new method of increasing his acquisitions and enjoyments, by disposing of what is superfluous in his own stores, in order to procure what is necessary or desirable in those of other men. Thus a commercial intercourse begins, and is carried on among the members of the same community. By degrees, they discover that neighbouring tribes possess what they want, and enjoy comforts of which they wish to partake. In the same mode, and upon the same principles, that domestic traffic is carried on within the society, an external commerce is established with other tribes or nations. Their mutual interest and mutual wants render this intercourse desirable, and imperceptibly introduce the maxims and laws which facilitate its progress and render it secure. But no very extensive commerce can take place between contiguous provinces, whose soil and climate being nearly the same, yield similar productions. Remote countries cannot convey their commodities by land, to those places, where on account of their rarity they are desired, and become valuable. It is to navigation that men are indebted for the power of transporting their superfluous stock of one part of the earth, to supply the wants of another. The luxuries and blessings of a particular climate are no longer confined to itself alone, but the enjoyment of them is communicated to the most distant regions.

BOOK I.

In proportion as the knowledge of the advantages derived from navigation and commerce continued to ſpread, the intercourſe among nations extended. The ambition of conqueſt, or the neceſſity of procuring a new ſettlement, were no longer the ſole motives of viſiting diſtant lands. The deſire of gain became a new incentive to activity, rouſed adventurers and ſent them forth upon long voyages in ſearch of countries, whoſe products or wants might increaſe that circulation, which nouriſhes and gives vigour to commerce. Trade proved a great ſource of diſcovery, it opened unknown ſeas, it penetrated into new regions, and contributed more than any other cauſe, to bring men acquainted with the ſituation, the nature, and commodities of the different parts of the globe. But even after a regular commerce was eſtabliſhed in the world, after nations were conſiderably civilized, and the ſciences and arts were cultivated with ardour and ſucceſs, navigation continued to be ſo imperfect, that it can hardly be ſaid to have advanced beyond the infancy of its improvement in the ancient world.

Imperfection of navigation among the ancients.

Among all the nations of antiquity the ſtructure of their veſſels was extremely rude, and their method of working them no leſs defective. They were unacquainted with ſome of the great principles and operations in navigation, which are now conſidered as the firſt elements on which that ſcience is founded. Though that property of the magnet, by which it attracts iron, was well known to the ancients, its moſt important and amazing virtue of pointing to the poles had entirely eſcaped their obſervation. Deſtitute of this faithful guide, which now conducts the pilot with ſo much certainty in the unbounded ocean, during the darkneſs of night, and when the heavens are covered with clouds, the ancients had no other method of regulating their courſe

courſe than by obſerving the ſun and ſtars. Their navigation was of conſequence uncertain and timid. They durſt ſeldom quit ſight of land, but crept along the coaſt, expoſed to all the dangers, and retarded by all the obſtructions, unavoidable in holding ſuch an aukward courſe. An incredible length of time was requiſite for performing voyages, which are now finiſhed in a ſhort ſpace. Even in the mildeſt climates, and in ſeas the leaſt tempeſtuous, it was only during the ſummer months that the ancients ventured out of their harbours. The remainder of the year was loſt in inactivity. It would have been deemed moſt inconſiderate raſhneſs to have braved the fury of the winds and waves during the winter. *

Navigation and commerce of the Egyptians.

WHILE both the ſcience and practice of navigation continued to be ſo defective, it was an undertaking of no ſmall difficulty and danger to viſit any remote region of the earth. Under every diſadvantage, however, the active ſpirit of commerce exerted itſelf. The Egyptians, ſoon after the eſtabliſhment of their monarchy, are ſaid to have opened a trade between the Arabian Gulph or Red Sea, and the weſtern coaſt of the great Indian continent. The commodities which they imported from the eaſt, were carried by land from the Arabian Gulph to the banks of the Nile, and conveyed down that river to the Mediterranean. But if the Egyptians in early times applied themſelves to commerce, their attention to it was of ſhort duration. The fertile ſoil and mild climate of Egypt produced the neceſſaries and comforts of life with ſuch profuſion, as rendered its inhabitants ſo independent of other countries, that it became an eſtabliſhed maxim among that people, whoſe ideas and in-

* Vegetius de Re milit. lib. iv.

ſtitutions

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ſtitutions differed in almoſt every point from thoſe of other nations, to renounce all intercourſe with foreigners. In conſequence of this, they never went out of their own country; they held all ſeafaring perſons in deteſtation, as impious and profane; and fortifying their own harbours, they denied ſtrangers admittance in to them *; and it was in the decline of their power, that they again opened their ports, and reſumed any communication with foreigners.

Of the Phenicians.

THE character and ſituation of the Phenicians were as favourable to the ſpirit of commerce and diſcovery as thoſe of the Egyptians were adverſe to it. They had no diſtinguiſhing peculiarity in their manners and inſtitutions; they were not addicted to any ſingular and unſocial form of ſuperſtition; they could mingle with other nations without ſcruple or reluctance. The territory which they poſſeſſed was neither large nor fertile. Commerce was the only ſource from which they could derive opulence or power. Accordingly, the trade carried on by the Phenicians of Sidon and Tyre, was more extenſive and enterprizing than that of any ſtate in the ancient world. The genius of the Phenicians, as well as the object of their policy and the ſpirit of their laws, were entirely commercial. They were a people of merchants who aimed at the empire of the ſea, and actually poſſeſſed it. Their ſhips not only frequented all the ports in the Mediterranean, but they were the firſt who ventured beyond the ancient boundaries of navigation, and paſſing the Streights of Gades, viſited the weſtern coaſts of Spain and Africa. In many of the places to which they reſorted, they planted colonies, and communicated to the rude inhabitants ſome knowledge of

* Diod. Sicul. lib. i. p. 78. Ed. Weſſelingi Amſt. 1756. Strabo, lib. xvii. p. 1142 Ed. Amſt. 1707.

their

their arts and improvements. While they extended their discoveries towards the north and the west, they did not neglect to penetrate into the more opulent and fertile regions of the south and east. Having rendered themselves masters of several commodious harbours towards the bottom of the Arabian Gulph, they, after the example of the Egyptians, established a regular intercourse with Arabia and the continent of India on the one hand, and with the eastern coast of Africa on the other. From these countries they imported many valuable commodities, unknown to the rest of the world, and, during a long period, engrossed that lucrative branch of commerce without a rival *.

Of the Jews.

THE vast wealth which the Phenicians acquired by monopolizing the trade carried on in the Red Sea, incited their neighbours the Jews, under the prosperous reigns of David and Solomon, to aim at being admitted to some share of it. This they obtained, partly by their conquest of Idumea, which stretches along the Red Sea, and partly by their alliance with Hiram king of Tyre. Solomon fitted out fleets, which, under the direction of Phenician pilots, sailed from the Red Sea to Tarshish and Ophir, which it is probable were ports in India and Africa that their conductors were accustomed to frequent, and returned with such valuable cargoes as suddenly diffused wealth and splendour through the kingdom of Israel †. But the singular institutions of the Jews, the observance of which was enjoined by their divine legislator, with an intention of preserving them a separate people, unin-

* See NOTE I. at the End of the Volume.

† Memoire sur le Pays d'Ophir par M. D'Anville Mem. de l'Academ. des Inscript. &c. tom. xxx. 83.

fected

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fected by idolatry, formed a national character incapable of that open and liberal intercourſe with ſtrangers which commerce requires. Accordingly this unſocial genius of the people, together with the diſaſters which befell the kingdom of Iſrael, prevented the commercial ſpirit which their monarchs laboured to introduce, and to cheriſh, from ſpreading among them. The Jews cannot be numbered among the nations which contributed to improve navigation, or to extend diſcovery.

Of the Carthaginians.

But though the inſtructions and example of the Phenicians were unable to mould the manners and temper of the Jews, in oppoſition to the tendency of their laws, they tranſmitted the commercial ſpirit with facility, and in full vigour, to their own deſcendants the Carthaginians. The commonwealth of Carthage applied to trade and to naval affairs, with no leſs ardour, ingenuity and ſucceſs, than its parent ſtate. Carthage early rivalled, and ſoon ſurpaſſed Tyre, in opulence and power, but ſeems not to have aimed at obtaining any ſhare in the commerce with India. The Phenicians had engroſſed this, and had ſuch a command of the Red Sea as ſecured to them the excluſive poſſeſſion of that lucrative branch of trade. The commercial activity of the Carthaginians was exerted in another direction. Without contending for the trade of the eaſt with their mother-country, they extended their navigation chiefly towards the weſt and north. Following the courſe which the Phenicians had opened, they paſſed the Straights of Gades, and puſhing their diſcoveries far beyond theirs, not only viſited all the coaſts of Spain, but thoſe of Gaul, and penetrated at laſt into Britain. At the ſame time that they acquired knowledge of new countries in this part of the globe, they gradually carried their reſearches towards the ſouth. They made conſiderable

ſiderable progreſs by land, into the interior provinces of Africa, traded with ſome of them, and ſubjected others to their empire. They ſailed along the weſtern coaſt of that great continent, almoſt to the tropic of Cancer, and planted ſeveral colonies, in order to civilize the natives, and accuſtom them to commerce. They diſcovered the Fortunate Iſlands, now known by the name of the Canaries, the utmoſt boundary of ancient navigation in the weſtern ocean *.

Nor was the progreſs of the Phenicians and Carthaginians in their knowledge of the globe, owing entirely to the deſire of extending their trade from one country to another. Commerce was followed by its uſual effects among both theſe people. It awakened curioſity, enlarged the ideas and deſires of men, and incited them to bold enterpriſes. Voyages were undertaken, the ſole object of which was to diſcover new countries, and explore unknown ſeas. Such, during the proſperous age of the Carthaginian republic, were the famous navigations of Hanno and Himilco. Both their fleets were equipped by authority of the ſenate, and at public expence. Hanno was directed to ſteer towards the ſouth, along the coaſt of Africa, and ſeems to have advanced much nearer the equinoctial line than any former navigator †. Himilco had it in charge to proceed towards the north, and to examine the weſtern coaſt of the European continent ‡. Of the ſame nature was the extraordinary navigation of the Phenicians round Africa. A Phenician fleet, we are told, fitted out by Necho king of Egypt, took its departure about ſix

* Plinii Nat. Hiſt. lib. vi. c. 37, edit. in uſum Delph. 4to, 1685.

† Plinii Nat. Hiſt. lib. v. c. 1. Hannonis Periplus ap. Geograph. minores, edit. Hudſoni, vol. 1. p. 1.

‡ Plinii Nat. Hiſt. lib. ii. c. 67. Feſtus Avienus apud Bochart. Geogr. ſacr. lib. i. c. 60. p. 652. Oper. vol. iii. L. Bat. 1707.

hundred

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hundred and four years before the Chriſtian æra, from a port in the Red Sea, doubled the ſouthern promontory of Africa, and, after a voyage of three years, returned by the Streights of Gades to the mouth of the Nile*. Eudoxus of Cyzicus is ſaid to have held the ſame courſe, and to have accompliſhed the ſame arduous undertaking †.

THESE voyages, if performed in the manner which I have related, may juſtly be reckoned the greateſt effort of navigation in the ancient world; and if we attend to the imperfect ſtate of the art at that time, it is difficult to determine, whether we ſhould moſt admire the courage and ſagacity with which the deſign was formed, or the conduct and good fortune with which it was executed. But unfortunately, all the original and authentic accounts of the Phenician and Carthaginian voyages, whether undertaken by public authority, or in proſecution of their private trade, have periſhed. The information which we receive concerning them from the Greek and Roman authors, is not only obſcure and inaccurate, but, if we except a ſhort narrative of Hanno's expedition, is of ſuſpicious authority ‡. Whatever acquaintance with the remote regions of the earth the Phenicians or Carthaginians may have acquired, was concealed from the reſt of mankind with a mercantile jealouſy. Every thing relative to the courſe of their navigation was not only a myſtery of trade, but a ſecret of ſtate. Extraordinary facts are recorded concerning their ſolicitude to prevent other nations from penetrating into what they wiſhed ſhould remain undivulged §. Many of their diſcoveries ſeem, accordingly, to have been ſcarcely known beyond the precincts of their own ſtates. The

* Herodot. lib. iv. c. 42.
† Plinii Nat. Hiſt. lib. 2. c. 67.
‡ See NOTE II.
§ Strab. Geogr. lib. 3. p. 265. lib. xviii. p. 1154.

navigation

navigation round Africa, in particular, is recorded by the Greek and Roman writers, rather as a ſtrange amuſing tale, which they either did not comprehend, or did not believe, than as a real tranſaction, which enlarged their knowledge and influenced their opinion *. As neither the progreſs of the Phenician and Carthaginian diſcoveries, nor the extent of their navigation, were communicated to the reſt of mankind, all memorials of their extraordinary ſkill in naval affairs ſeem, in a great meaſure, to have periſhed, when the maritime power of the former was annihilated by Alexander's conqueſt of Tyre, and the empire of the latter was overturned by the Roman arms.

Of the Greeks.

LEAVING, then, the obſcure and pompous accounts of the Phenician and Carthaginian voyages to the curioſity and conjectures of antiquaries, hiſtory muſt reſt ſatisfied with relating the progreſs of navigation and diſcovery among the Greeks and Romans, which, though leſs ſplendid, is better aſcertained. It is evident that the Phenicians, who inſtructed the Greeks in other uſeful ſciences and arts, did not communicate to them that extenſive knowledge of navigation, which they themſelves poſſeſſed; nor did the Romans imbibe that commercial ſpirit and ardour for diſcovery which diſtinguiſhed the Carthaginians. Though Greece be almoſt encompaſſed by the ſea, which formed many ſpacious bays and commodious harbours, though it be ſurrounded by a vaſt number of fertile iſlands, yet, notwithſtanding ſuch a favourable ſituation, which ſeemed to invite that ingenious people to apply themſelves to navigation, it was long before this art attained any degree of perfection among them. Their early voyages, the object of which was piracy rather than commerce, were ſo

* See NOTE III.

inconſiderable,

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inconſiderable, that the expedition of the Argonauts from the coaſt of Theſſaly to the Euxine ſea, appeared ſuch an amazing effort of ſkill and courage, as entitled the conductors of it to be ranked among the demigods, and exalted the veſſel in which they ſailed to a place among the heavenly conſtellations. Even at a later period, when the Greeks engaged in their famous enterprize againſt Troy, their knowledge in naval affairs ſeems not to have been much improved. According to the account of Homer, the only poet to whom hiſtory ventures to appeal, and who, by his ſcrupulous accuracy in deſcribing the manners and arts of early ages, merits this diſtinction, the ſcience of navigation, at that time, had hardly advanced beyond its rudeſt ſtate. The Greeks in the heroic age were unacquainted with the uſe of iron, the moſt ſerviceable of all the metals, without which no conſiderable progreſs, was ever made in the mechanical arts. Their veſſels were of inconſiderable burthen, and moſtly without decks. Theſe had only one maſt, which they erected or took down at pleaſure. They were ſtrangers to the uſe of anchors. All their operations in ſailing were clumſy and unſkilful. They turned their obſervation towards ſtars, which were improper for regulating their courſe, and their mode of obſerving them was inaccurate and fallacious. When they had finiſhed a voyage, they drew their paltry barks aſhore, as ſavages do their canoes, and they remained on dry land until the ſeaſon of returning to ſea approached. It is not then in the early or heroic ages of Greece, that we can expect to obſerve the ſcience of navigation and the ſpirit of diſcovery making any conſiderable progreſs. During that period of diſorder and ignorance, a thouſand cauſes concurred in reſtraining curioſity and enterprize within very narrow bounds.

But the Greeks advanced with rapidity to a ſtate of greater civilization and refinement. Government, in its moſt liberal and perfect form, began to be eſtabliſhed in the communities of Greece; equal laws and regular police were gradually introduced; the ſciences and arts that are uſeful or ornamental in life were carried to a high pitch of improvement, and ſeveral of the Grecian commonwealths applied to commerce with ſuch ardour and ſucceſs, that they were conſidered, in the ancient world, as maritime powers of the firſt rank. Even then, however, the naval victories of the Greeks muſt be aſcribed rather to the native ſpirit of the people, and to that courage which the enjoyment of liberty inſpires, than to any extraordinary progreſs in the ſcience of navigation. In the Perſian war, thoſe exploits which the eloquence of the Greek hiſtorians have rendered ſo famous, were performed by fleets, compoſed chiefly of veſſels that were open, and without decks*; the crews of which ruſhed forward with impetuous valour, but little art, to board thoſe of the enemy. In the war of Peloponneſus, their ſhips ſeem ſtill to have been of inconſiderable burthen and of ſmall force. The extent of their trade was in proportion to this low condition of their marine. The maritime ſtates of Greece hardly carried on any commerce beyond the limits of the Mediterranean ſea. Their chief intercourſe was with the colonies of their countrymen, planted in the leſſer Aſia, in Italy and Sicily. They ſometimes viſited the ports of Egypt, of Gaul, and of Thrace, or paſſing through the Helleſpont, they traded with the countries ſituated around the Euxine ſea. Amazing inſtances occur of their ignorance, even of thoſe countries, which lay within the narrow precincts to which their na-

* Thucyd. lib. i. c. 14.

vigation

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vigation was confined. When the Greeks had aſſembled their combined fleet againſt Xerxes at Egina, they thought it unadviſable to ſail to Samos, becauſe they believed the diſtance between that iſland and Egina to be as great as the diſtance between Egina and the Pillars of Hercules*. They were either utterly unacquainted with all the parts of the globe beyond the Mediterranean ſea, or what knowledge they had of them was founded on conjecture, or derived from the informations of a few perſons, whom curioſity and the love of ſcience had prompted to travel by land into the Upper Aſia, or by ſea into Egypt, the ancient ſeats of wiſdom and arts. After all that the Greeks learned from them, they appear to have been ignorant of the moſt important facts, on which an accurate and ſcientific knowledge of the globe is founded.

THE expedition of Alexander the Great into the eaſt, conſiderably enlarged the ſphere of navigation and of geographical knowledge among the Greeks. That extraordinary man, notwithſtanding the violent paſſions which incited him, at ſome times, to the wildeſt actions, and the moſt extravagant enterpriſes, poſſeſſed talents which fitted him not only to conquer, but to govern the world. He was capable of framing thoſe bold and original ſchemes of policy, which give a new form to human affairs. The revolution in commerce, brought about by the force of his genius, is hardly inferior to that revolution in empire, occaſioned by the ſucceſs of his arms. It is probable, that the oppoſition and efforts of the republic of Tyre, which checked him ſo long in the career of his victories, gave Alexander an opportunity of obſerving the vaſt re-

* Herodot. lib. viii. c. 132.

ſources

ſources of a maritime power, and conveyed to him ſome idea of the immenſe wealth which the Tyrians derived from their commerce, eſpecially that with the Eaſt Indies. As ſoon as he had accompliſhed the deſtruction of that ſtate, and reduced Egypt to ſubjection, he formed the plan of rendering the empire which he propoſed to eſtabliſh, the centre of commerce as well as the ſeat of dominion. With this view he founded a great city, which he honoured with his own name, near one of the mouths of the river Nile, that by the Mediterranean ſea, and the neighbourhood of the Arabian Gulf, it might command the trade both of the eaſt and weſt *. This ſituation was choſen with ſuch diſcernment, that Alexandria ſoon became the chief commercial city in the world. Not only during the ſubſiſtence of the Grecian empire in Egypt and in the eaſt, but amidſt all the ſucceſſive revolutions in thoſe countries, from the time of the Ptolemies to the diſcovery of the navigation by the Cape of Good Hope, commerce, particularly that of the Eaſt Indies, continued to flow in the channel which the ſagacity and foreſight of Alexander had marked out for it.

His ambition was not ſatisfied with having opened to the Greeks a communication with India by ſea; he aſpired to the ſovereignty of thoſe regions which furniſhed the reſt of mankind with ſo many precious commodities, and conducted his army thither by land. Enterpriſing, however, as he was, he may be ſaid rather to have diſcovered, than to have conquered that country. He did not, in his progreſs towards the eaſt, advance beyond the banks of the rivers that fall into the Indus, which is now the weſtern boundary of the vaſt continent of

* Strab. Geogr. lib. xvii. p. 1143. 1149.

India.

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India. Amidſt the wild exploits which diſtinguiſh this part of his hiſtory, he purſued meaſures that mark the ſuperiority of his genius, as well as the extent of his views. He had penetrated as far into India as to confirm his opinion of its commercial importance, and to perceive that immenſe wealth might be derived from intercourſe with a country, where the arts of elegance having been more early cultivated, were arrived at greater perfection than in any other part of the earth *. Full of this idea, he reſolved to examine the courſe of navigation from the mouth of the Indus to the bottom of the Perſian Gulph; and if it ſhould be found practicable, to eſtabliſh a regular communication between them. In order to effect this, he propoſed to remove the cataracts, with which, the jealouſy of the Perſians, and their averſion to correſpondence with foreigners, had obſtructed the entrance into the Euphrates †; to carry the commodities of the eaſt up that river, and the Tigris, which unites with it, into the interior parts of his Aſiatic dominions; while, by the way of the Arabian Gulph, and the river Nile, they might be conveyed to Alexandria, and diſtributed to the reſt of the world. Nearchus, an officer of eminent abilities, was entruſted with the command of the fleet fitted out for this expedition. He performed this voyage, which was deemed an enterpriſe ſo arduous and important, that Alexander reckoned it one of the moſt extraordinary events which diſtinguiſhed his reign. Inconſiderable as it may now appear, it was, at that time, an undertaking of no little merit and difficulty. In the proſecution of it, ſtriking inſtances occur of the ſmall progreſs which the Greeks had made in naval knowledge ‡. Having never ſailed beyond the bounds

* Strab. Geogr. lib. xv. p. 1036. Q. Curtius, lib. xviii. c. 9.
† Strab. Geogr. lib. xvi. p. 1075. ‡ See NOTE IV.

bounds of the Mediterranean, where the ebb and flow of the ſea are hardly perceptible, when they firſt obſerved this phænomenon at the mouth of the Indus, it appeared to them a prodigy, by which the gods teſtified the diſpleaſure of Heaven againſt their enterpriſe *. During their whole courſe, they ſeem never to have loſt ſight of land, but followed the bearings of the coaſt ſo ſervilely, that they could not much avail themſelves of thoſe periodical winds, which facilitate navigation in the Indian ocean. Accordingly, they ſpent no leſs than ten months † in performing this voyage, which, from the mouth of the Indus to that of the Perſian gulph, does not exceed twenty degrees. It is probable, that amidſt the violent convulſions, and frequent revolutions in the eaſt, occaſioned by the conteſts among the ſucceſſors of Alexander, the navigation to India, by the courſe which Nearchus had opened, was diſcontinued. The Indian trade carried on at Alexandria, not only ſubſiſted, but was ſo much improved under the Grecian monarchs of Egypt, that it proved a great ſource of the wealth which diſtinguiſhed that kingdom.

Of the Romans.

THE progreſs which the Romans made in navigation and diſcovery, was ſtill more inconſiderable than that of the Greeks. The genius of the Roman people, their military education, and the ſpirit of their laws, concurred in eſtranging them from commerce and naval affairs. It was the neceſſity of oppoſing a formidable rival, not the deſire of extending trade, which firſt prompted them to aim at maritime power. Though they ſoon perceived that, in order to acquire the univerſal dominion after which they aſpired, it was neceſſary to render themſelves maſters of the ſea, they ſtill conſidered the naval ſervice

* See NOTE V.

† Plin. Hiſt. Nat. lib. vi. c. 23.

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as a ſubordinate ſtation, and reſerved for it ſuch citizens as were not of a rank to be admitted into the legions *. In the hiſtory of the Roman republic, hardly one event occurs, that marks attention to navigation any farther than as it was inſtrumental towards conqueſt. When the Roman valour and diſcipline had ſubdued all the maritime ſtates known in the ancient world; when Carthage, Greece, and Egypt, had ſubmitted to their power, the Romans did not imbibe the commercial ſpirit of the conquered nations. Among that people of ſoldiers, to have applied to trade would have been deemed a degradation of a Roman citizen. They abandoned the mechanical arts, commerce, and navigation, to ſlaves, to freemen, to provincials, and to citizens of the loweſt claſs. Even after the ſubverſion of liberty, when the ſeverity and haughtineſs of ancient manners began to abate, commerce did not riſe into high eſtimation among the Romans. The trade of Greece, Egypt, and the other conquered countries, continued to be carried on in their ancient channels, after they were reduced into the form of Roman provinces. As Rome was the capital of the world, and the ſeat of government, all the wealth and valuable productions of the provinces flowed naturally thither. The Romans, ſatisfied with this, ſeem to have ſuffered commerce to remain almoſt entirely in the hands of the natives of the reſpective countries. The extent, however, of the Roman power, which reached over almoſt the whole known world, the vigilant inſpection of the Roman magiſtrates, and the ſpirit of the Roman government, no leſs intelligent than active, gave ſuch additional ſecurity to commerce, as animated it with new vigour. The union among nations was never ſo entire, nor the intercourſe ſo perfect, as within the bounds of this vaſt empire. Commerce

* Polyb. lib. v.

under

under their dominion, was not obſtructed by the jealouſy of rival ſtates, interrupted by frequent hoſtilities, or limited by partial reſtrictions. One ſuperintending power moved and regulated the induſtry of mankind, and enjoyed the fruits of their joint efforts.

NAVIGATION felt this influence, and improved under it. As ſoon as the Romans acquired a taſte for the luxuries of the eaſt, the trade with India through Egypt was puſhed with new vigour, and carried on to greater extent. By frequenting the Indian continent, navigators became acquainted with the periodical courſe of the winds, which, in the ocean that ſeparates Africa from India, blow with little variation during one half of the year from the eaſt, and during the other half fix with equal ſteadineſs in the weſt. Encouraged by obſerving this, they abandoned their ancient ſlow and dangerous courſe along the coaſt, and as ſoon as the weſtern monſoon ſet in, took their departure from Ocelis, at the mouth of the Arabian gulf, and ſtretched boldly acroſs the ocean *. The uniform direction of the wind, ſupplying the place of the compaſs, and rendering the guidance of the ſtars leſs neceſſary, conducted them to the port of Muſiris, on the weſtern ſhore of the Indian continent. There they took on board their cargo, and returning with the eaſtern monſoon, finiſhed their voyage to the Arabian gulf within the year. This part of India, now known by the name of the Malabar coaſt, ſeems to have been the utmoſt limit of ancient navigation in that of the quarter globe. What imperfect knowledge the ancients had of the immenſe countries which ſtretch beyond this towards the eaſt, they received from a few adventurers, who had viſited them by land. Their excurſions were not extenſive, and it is probable, that while the Roman intercourſe with India ſubſiſted, no traveller

* Plin. Hiſt. Nat. lib. vi. c. 23.

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ever penetrated further than to the banks of the Ganges *. The fleets from Egypt which traded at Muſiris were loaded, it is true, with the ſpices and other rich commodities of the continent and iſlands of the farther India; but theſe were brought to that port, which became the ſtaple of this commerce, by the Indians themſelves, in canoes made of one tree †. The Egyptian and Roman merchants, ſatisfied with acquiring theſe commodities in this manner, did not think it neceſſary to explore unknown ſeas, and venture upon a dangerous navigation, in queſt of the countries which produced them. But though the diſcoveries of the Romans in India were ſo limited, their commerce there was ſuch as will appear conſiderable, even to the preſent age, in which the Indian trade has been extended far beyond the practice or conception of any preceding period. We are informed by one author of credit ||, that the commerce with India drained the Roman empire every year of more than four hundred thouſand pounds; and by another, that one hundred and twenty ſhips ſailed annually from the Arabian gulf to that country ‡.

Diſcoveries of the ancients by land.

THE diſcovery of this new method of ſailing to India is the moſt conſiderable improvement in navigation made during the continuance of the Roman power. But in ancient times, the knowledge of countries was acquired more by land than by ſea §; and the Romans, from their peculiar diſinclination to naval affairs, may be ſaid to have neglected totally the latter, though a more eaſy and expeditious method of diſcovery. The progreſs, however, of their victorious armies contributed greatly to extend diſcovery by land, and even opened the navigation of new and unknown ſeas. Previous to the Roman

* Strab. Geogr. lib. xv. p. 1006. 1010. See NOTE VI.
† Plin. Nat. Hiſt. lib. vi. c. 26.
‡ Strab. Geogr. lib. ii. p 179.
|| Ibid.
§ See NOTE VII.

conqueſts,

conqueſts, the civilized nations of antiquity had no communication with thoſe countries in Europe, which now form its moſt opulent and powerful kingdoms. The interior parts of Spain and of Gaul were little known. Britain, ſeparated from the reſt of the world, had never been viſited, except by its neighbours the Gauls, and by a few Carthaginian merchants. The name of Germany had ſcarcely been heard of. Into all theſe countries the arms of the Romans penetrated. They entirely ſubdued Spain and Gaul; they conquered the greateſt and moſt fertile part of Britain; they advanced into Germany, as far as the banks of the river Elbe. In Africa, they acquired a conſiderable knowledge of the provinces, which ſtretch along the Mediterranean ſea, from Egypt weſtward to the ſtraits of Gades. In Aſia, they not only ſubjected to their power moſt of the provinces which compoſed the Perſian and Macedonian empires, but, after their victories over Mithridates and Tigranes, they ſeem to have ſurveyed the countries contiguous to the Euxine and Caſpian ſeas, more accurately than they had been formerly, and to have carried on a more extenſive trade than that of the Greeks with the opulent and commercial nations, then ſeated around the Euxine ſea.

Imperfection of geographical knowledge among the ancients.

FROM this ſuccinct ſurvey of diſcovery and navigation, which I have traced from the earlieſt dawn of hiſtorical knowledge to the full eſtabliſhment of the Roman dominion, their progreſs appears to be wonderfully ſlow. It ſeems neither adequate to what we might have expected from the activity and enterpriſe of the human mind, nor to what might have been performed by the power of the great empires that ſucceſſively governed the world. If we reject accounts that are fabulous and obſcure; if we adhere ſteadily to the light and information of authentic

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thentic hiſtory, without ſubſtituting in its place the conjectures of fancy, or the dreams of etymologiſts, we muſt conclude, that the knowledge which the ancients had acquired of the habitable globe was extremely confined. In Europe, the extenſive provinces in the eaſtern part of Germany were hardly known to them. They were almoſt totally unacquainted with the vaſt countries which are now ſubject to the kings of Denmark, Sweden, Pruſſia, Poland, and the Ruſſian empire. The more barren regions, that ſtretch within the arctic circle, were quite unexplored. In Africa, their reſearches did not extend far beyond the provinces which border on the Mediterranean, and thoſe ſituated on the weſtern ſhore of the Arabian gulf. In Aſia, they were unacquainted, as I formerly obſerved, with all the fertile and opulent countries beyond the Ganges, which furniſh the moſt valuable commodities that, in modern times, have been the great object of the European commerce with India; nor do they ſeem to have ever penetrated into thoſe immenſe regions occupied by the wandering tribes, which they called by the general name of Sarmatians or Scythians, and now poſſeſſed by Tartars of various denominations, and by the Aſiatic ſubjects of Ruſſia.

A remarkable proof of this.

But there is one opinion that univerſally prevailed among the ancients, which conveys a more ſtriking idea of the ſmall progreſs they had made in the knowledge of the habitable globe, than can be derived from any detail of their diſcoveries. They ſuppoſed the earth to be divided into five regions, which they diſtinguiſhed by the name of zones. Two of theſe, which were neareſt the poles, they termed frigid zones, and believed that the extreme cold which reigned perpetually there, rendered them uninhabitable. Another, ſeated under

der the line, and extending on either ſide towards the tropics, they called the torrid zone, and imagined it to be ſo burnt up with unremitting heat, as to be equally deſtitute of inhabitants. On the two other zones, which occupied the remainder of the earth, they beſtowed the appellation of temperate, and taught that theſe, being the only regions in which life could ſubſiſt, were allotted to man for his habitation. This wild opinion was not a conceit of the uninformed vulgar, or a fanciful fiction of the poets, but a ſyſtem adopted by the moſt enlightened philoſophers, the moſt accurate hiſtorians and geographers in Greece and Rome. According to this theory, a vaſt portion of the habitable earth was pronounced to be unfit for ſuſtaining the human ſpecies. Thoſe fertile and populous regions within the torrid zone, which are now known not only to yield their own inhabitants the neceſſaries and comforts of life, with moſt luxuriant profuſion, but to communicate their ſuperfluous ſtores to the reſt of the world, were ſuppoſed to be the manſion of perpetual ſterility and deſolation. As all the parts of the globe, which the ancients had diſcovered, lay within the northern temperate zone, their opinion that the other temperate zone was filled with inhabitants, was founded on reaſoning and conjecture, not on diſcovery. They even believed that, by the intolerable heat of the torrid zone, ſuch an inſuperable barrier was placed between the two temperate regions of the earth, as would prevent for ever any intercourſe between their reſpective inhabitants. Thus this extravagant theory not only proves that the ancients were unacquainted with the true ſtate of the globe, but it tended to render their ignorance of it perpetual, by repreſenting all attempts towards opening a communication with the remote regions of the earth, as utterly impracticable *.

* See NOTE VIII.

BUT,

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But, however imperfect or inaccurate the geographical knowledge which the Greeks and Romans had acquired may appear, in respect of the present improved state of that science, their progress in discovery will seem considerable, and the extent to which they carried navigation and commerce must be reckoned great, when compared with the ignorance of early times. As long as the Roman empire retained such vigour as to preserve its authority over the conquered nations, and to keep them united, it was an object of public police, as well as of private curiosity, to examine and describe the countries which composed this great body. Even when the other sciences began to decline, geography, enriched with new observations, and receiving some accession from the experience of every age, and the reports of every traveller, continued to improve. It attained to the highest point of perfection and accuracy to which it ever arrived in the ancient world, by the industry and genius of Ptolemy the philosopher. He flourished in the second century of the Christian æra, and published a description of the terrestrial globe, more ample and exact than that of any of his predecessors.

Improvements in geography by Ptolemy.

But, soon after, violent convulsions began to shake the Roman state; the fatal ambition or caprice of Constantine, by changing the seat of government divided and weakened its force; the barbarous nations, which Providence prepared as its instruments to overturn the mighty fabric of the Roman power, began to assemble and to muster their armies on its frontier; the empire tottered to its fall. During this decline and old age of the Roman state, it was impossible that the sciences should go on improving. The efforts of genius were, at that period, as languid and feeble as those of government.

The invasion of the Roman empire by barbarous nations.

vernment. From the time of Ptolemy, no conſiderable addition ſeems to have been made to geographical knowledge, nor did any important revolution happen in trade, excepting that Conſtantinople, by its advantageous ſituation and the encouragement of the eaſtern emperors, became a commercial city of the firſt note.

Effects of their Conqueſts on commercial intercourſe.

At length, the clouds which had been ſo long gathering round the Roman empire, burſt into a ſtorm. The barbarous nations ruſhed in with irreſiſtible impetuoſity, and, in the general wreck, occaſioned by the inundation which overwhelmed Europe, the arts, ſciences, inventions and diſcoveries of the Romans, periſhed and diſappeared*. All the various tribes, which conquered and ſettled in the different provinces of the Roman empire, were uncivilized, ſtrangers to letters, deſtitute of arts, unacquainted with regular government, ſubordination, or laws. The manners and inſtitutions of ſome of them were ſo rude and barbarous, as to be hardly compatible with a ſtate of ſocial union. Europe, when occupied by ſuch inhabitants, may be ſaid to have returned to a ſecond infancy, and had to begin anew its career in improvement, ſcience, and civility. The firſt effect of the ſettlement of thoſe barbarous invaders was to diſſolve the union by which the Roman power had cemented mankind together. They parcelled out Europe into many ſmall and independent ſtates, differing from each other in language and cuſtoms. No intercourſe ſubſiſted between the members of thoſe divided and hoſtile communities. Accuſtomed to a ſimple mode of life, and averſe to induſtry, they had few wants to ſupply, and no ſuperfluities to diſpoſe of. The names of *ſtranger* and of *enemy* became once more words of the ſame import. Cuſ-

* Hiſt. of Charles V. vol. i. p. 18. 72.

toms

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toms every-where prevailed, and even laws were eſtabliſhtd which rendered it diſagreeable and dangerous to viſit any foreign country *. Cities, in which alone an extenſive commerce can be carried on, were few, inconſiderable, and deſtitute of thoſe immunities which produce ſecurity or excite enterpriſe. The ſciences, on which geography and navigation are founded, were not cultivated. The accounts of ancient improvements and diſcoveries, contained in the Greek and Roman authors, were neglected or miſunderſtood. The knowledge of remote regions was loſt, their ſituation, their commodities, and almoſt their names, were unknown.

Commercial knowledge ſtill preſerved in the Eaſtern empire,

One circumſtance prevented commercial intercourſe with diſtant nations from ceaſing altogether. Conſtantinople, though often threatened by the fierce invaders, who ſpread deſolation over the reſt of Europe, was ſo fortunate as to eſcape their deſtructive rage. In that city, the knowledge of ancient arts and diſcoveries was preſerved; a taſte for ſplendour and elegance ſubſiſted; the productions and luxuries of foreign countries were in requeſt; commerce continued to flouriſh there, when it was extinct in every other part of Europe. The citizens of Conſtantinople did not confine their trade to the iſlands of the Archipelago, or to the adjacent coaſts of Aſia; they took a wider range, and following the courſe which the ancients had marked out, imported the commodities of the Eaſt Indies from Alexandria. When Egypt was torn from the Roman empire by the Arabians, the induſtry of the Greeks diſcovered a new channel, by which the productions of India might be conveyed to Conſtantinople. They were carried up the

* Hiſt. of Charles V. vol. i. p. 77. 327.

Indus,

Indus, as far as that great river is navigable; thence they were tranſported by land to the banks of the river Oxus, and proceeded down its ſtream to the Caſpian ſea. There they entered the Volga, and ſailing up it, were carried by land to the Tanais, which conducted them into the Euxine ſea, where veſſels from Conſtantinople waited their arrival *. This extraordinary and tedious mode of conveyance merits attention, not only as a proof of the violent paſſion which the inhabitants of Conſtantinople had conceived for the luxuries of the eaſt, and as a ſpecimen of the ardour and ingenuity with which they carried on commerce, but becauſe it demonſtrates, that, during the ignorance which reigned in the reſt of Europe, an extenſive knowledge of remote countries was ſtill preſerved in the capital of the Greek empire.

and among the Arabians.

At the ſame time, a gleam of light and knowledge broke in upon the eaſt. The Arabians, having contracted ſome reliſh for the ſciences of the people whoſe empire they had contributed to overturn, tranſlated the books of ſeveral of the Greek philoſophers into their own language. One of the firſt was that valuable work of Ptolemy, which I have already mentioned. The ſtudy of geography became, of conſequence, an early object of attention to the Arabians. But that acute and ingenious people cultivated chiefly the ſpeculative and ſcientific parts of geography. In order to aſcertain the figure and dimenſions of the terreſtrial globe, they applied the principles of geometry, they had recourſe to aſtronomical obſervations, they employed experiments and operations, which Europe, in more enlightened times, has been proud to adopt and to imitate. At that period, however, the fame of the improvements made by the Arabi-

* Ramuſio, vol. i. p. 372. F.

ans

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ans did not reach Europe. The knowledge of their diſcoveries was reſerved for ages capable of comprehending and of perfecting them.

Revival of commerce and navigation in Europe.

By degrees, the calamities and deſolation brought upon the weſtern provinces of the Roman empire by its barbarous conquerors, were forgotten, and in ſome meaſure repaired. The rude tribes which ſettled there, acquiring inſenſibly ſome idea of regular government, and ſome reliſh for the functions and comforts of civil life, Europe began to awake from its torpid and unactive ſtate. The firſt ſymptoms of revival were diſcerned in Italy. The northern tribes which took poſſeſſion of this country, made progreſs in improvement with greater rapidity than the people ſettled in other parts of Europe. Various cauſes, which it is not the object of this work to enumerate or explain, concurred in reſtoring liberty and independence to the cities of Italy *. The acquiſition of theſe rouſed induſtry, and gave motion and vigour to all the active powers of the human mind. Foreign commerce revived, navigation was attended to and improved. Conſtantinople became the chief mart to which the Italians reſorted. There they not only met with a favourable reception, but obtained ſuch mercantile privileges as enabled them to carry on trade with great advantage. They were ſupplied both with the precious commodities of the eaſt, and with many curious manufactures, the product of the ancient arts and ingenuity that ſtill ſubſiſted among the Greeks. As the labour and expence of conveying the productions of India to Conſtantinople by that long and indirect courſe which I have deſcribed, rendered them extremely rare, and of an exorbitant price, the induſtry of the Italians

* Hiſt. of Charles V. vol. i. p. 33.

diſcovered

discovered other methods of procuring them in greater abundance, and at an easier rate. They sometimes purchased them in Aleppo, Tripoli, and other ports on the coast of Syria, to which they were brought by a route not unknown to the ancients. They were conveyed from India by sea, up the Persian Gulf, and ascending the Euphrates and Tigris, as far as Bagdat, were carried by land across the Desart to Palmyra, and from thence to the towns on the Mediterranean. But from the length of the journey, and the dangers to which the caravans were exposed, this proved always a tedious, and often a precarious mode of conveyance. At length the Soldans of Egypt, having renewed the commerce with India in its ancient channel, by the Arabian Gulf, the Italian merchants, notwithstanding the violent antipathy to each other with which Christians and the followers of Mahomet were then possessed, repaired to Alexandria, and enduring, from the love of gain, the insolence and exactions of the Mahometans, established a lucrative trade in that port. From that period, the commercial spirit of Italy became active and enterprising. Venice, Genoa, Pisa, rose from inconsiderable towns, to be populous and wealthy cities. Their naval power increased; their vessels frequented all the ports in the Mediterranean; they ventured sometimes beyond the Streights; visited the maritime towns of Spain, France, the Low Countries, and England, and, by distributing their commodities over Europe, began to communicate to its various nations some knowledge of the valuable productions of the east, as well as some ideas of manufactures and arts, with which they had hitherto been unacquainted.

Their progress favoured by the Crusades,

WHILE the cities of Italy were thus advancing in their career of improvement, an event happened, the most extraordinary perhaps in the history of mankind,

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mankind, which, instead of retarding the commercial progress of the Italians, rendered it more rapid. The martial spirit of the Europeans, heightened and inflamed by religious zeal, prompted them to deliver the Holy Land from the dominion of infidels. Vast armies, composed of all the nations of Europe, marched towards Asia, upon this wild enterprise. The Genoese, the Pisans, and Venetians furnished the transports which carried them thither. They supplied them with provisions and military stores. Beside the immense sums which they received on this account, they obtained commercial privileges and establishments, of great consequence in the settlements which the Crusaders made in Palestine, and in other provinces of Asia. From those sources, prodigious wealth flowed into the cities which I have mentioned. A proportional increase of power accompanied this, and by the end of the Holy War, Venice, in particular, became a great maritime state, possessing an extensive commerce, and ample territories *. Italy was not the only country in which the Crusades contributed to revive and diffuse such a spirit as prepared Europe for future discoveries. By their expeditions into Asia, the other European nations became well acquainted with remote regions, which formerly they knew only by name, or by the reports of ignorant and credulous pilgrims. They had an opportunity of observing the manners, the arts, and the accommodations of people more polished than themselves. This intercourse between the east and west subsisted almost two centuries. The adventurers, who returned from Asia, communicated to their countrymen the ideas which they had acquired, and the habits of life they had contracted by visiting more refined nations. The Europeans began to be

* Essai de l'Histoire du Commerce de Venise, p. 52. &c.

sensible

ſenſible of wants with which they were formerly unacquainted; new deſires were excited; and ſuch a taſte for the commodities and arts of other countries gradually ſpread among them, that they not only encouraged the reſort of foreigners to their harbours, but began to perceive the advantage and neceſſity of applying to commerce themſelves *.

by the diſcoveries of travellers by land.

THIS communication, which was opened between Europe and the weſtern provinces of Aſia, encouraged ſeveral perſons to advance far beyond the countries in which the Cruſaders carried on their operations, and to travel by land into the more remote and opulent regions of the eaſt. The wild fanaticiſm, which ſeems at that period to have mingled in all the ſchemes of individuals, no leſs than in all the counſels of nations, firſt incited men to enter upon thoſe long and dangerous peregrinations. They were afterwards undertaken from proſpects of commercial advantage, or from motives of mere curioſity. Benjamin, a Jew of Tudela, in the kingdom of Navarre, poſſeſſed with a ſuperſtitious veneration for the law of Moſes, and ſolicitous to viſit his countrymen in the eaſt, whom he hoped to find in ſuch a ſtate of power and opulence, as might redound to the honour of his ſect, ſet out from Spain in the year 1160, and travelling by land to Conſtantinople, proceeded through the countries to the north of the Euxine and Caſpian ſeas, as far as Chineſe Tartary. From thence he took his route towards the ſouth, and after traverſing various provinces of the farther India, he embarked on the Indian ocean, viſited ſeveral of its iſlands, and returned at the end of thirteen years, by the way of Egypt to Europe, with much information concerning a large diſtrict of the globe, altogether unknown at that time to the weſt-

* Hiſt. of Charles V. vol. i. p. 25, &c.

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ern world*. The zeal of the head of the Chriſtian church co-operated with the ſuperſtition of Benjamin the Jew, in diſcovering the interior and remote provinces of Aſia. All Chriſtendom having been alarmed with accounts of the rapid progreſs of the Tartar arms under Zengis Khan, Innocent IV. who entertained moſt exalted ideas concerning the plenitude of his power, and the ſubmiſſion due to his injunctions, ſent father John de Plano Carpini, at the head of a miſſion of Franciſcan monks, and father Aſcolino, at the head of another of Dominicans, to exhort Kayuk Khan, the grandſon of Zengis, who was then at the head of the Tartar empire, to embrace the Chriſtian faith, and to deſiſt from deſolating the earth by his arms. The haughty deſcendant of the greateſt conqueror Aſia had ever beheld, aſtoniſhed at this ſtrange mandate from an Italian Prieſt, whoſe name and power were alike unknown to him, received it with the contempt which it merited, though he diſmiſſed the mendicants who delivered it with impunity. But as they had penetrated into the country by different routes, and followed for ſome time the Tartar camps, which were always in motion, they had an opportunity of viſiting a great part of Aſia. Carpini, who proceeded by the way of Poland and Ruſſia, travelled through its northern provinces as far as the extremities of Thibet. Aſcolino, who ſeems to have landed ſomewhere in Syria, advanced through its ſouthern provinces, into the interior parts of Perſia †.

1246.

1253. NOT long after, St. Louis of France contributed farther towards extending the knowledge which the Europeans had begun to acquire of thoſe diſtant re-

* Bergeron Recueil des Voyages, &c. tom. i. p. 1.
† Hakluyt. i. 21. Bergeron, tom. i.

gions.

gions. Some designing impostor, who took advantage of the slender acquaintance of the Christians with the state and character of the Asiatic nations, having informed him that a powerful Chan of the Tartars had embraced the Christian faith, the monarch listened to the tale with pious credulity, and instantly resolved to send ambassadors to this illustrious convert, with a view of inciting him to attack their common enemy the Saracens on one quarter, while he fell upon them on the other. As monks were the only persons in that age who possessed such a degree of knowledge as qualified them for a service of this kind, he employed in it father Andrew, a Jacobine, who was followed by father William de Rubruquis, a Franciscan. With respect to the progress of the former, there is no memorial extant. The journal of the latter has been published. He was admitted into the presence of Mangu, the third khan in succession from Zengis, and made a circuit through the interior parts of Asia, more extensive than that of any European who had hitherto explored them *.

To those travellers, whom religious zeal sent forth to visit Asia, succeeded others who ventured into remote countries from the prospect of commercial advantage, or from motives of mere curiosity. The first and most eminent of these was Marco Polo, a Venetian of a noble family. Having engaged early in trade, according to the custom of his country, his aspiring mind wished for a sphere of activity more extensive than was afforded to it by the established traffic carried on in those ports of Europe and Asia, which the Venetians frequented. This prompted him to travel into unknown countries, in expectation of opening with them a commercial intercourse, more suited to the sanguine ideas and hopes of a young adventurer. As his 1269.

* Hakl. i. 71. Recueil de Voyages par Bergeron, tom. i.

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father had already carried ſome European commodities to the court of the great Chan of the Tartars, and had diſpoſed of them to advantage, he reſorted thither. Under the protection of Kublay Chan, the moſt powerful of all the ſucceſſors of Zengis, he continued his mercantile peregrinations in Aſia upwards of twenty-ſix years; and during that time advanced towards the eaſt, far beyond the utmoſt boundaries to which any European traveller had ever proceeded. Inſtead of following the courſe of Carpini and Rubruquis, along the vaſt unpeopled plains of Tartary, he paſſed through the chief trading cities in the more cultivated parts of Aſia, and penetrated to Cambalu, or Peking, the capital of the great kingdom of Cathay, or China, ſubject at that time to the ſucceſſors of Zengis. He made more than one voyage on the Indian ocean, he traded in many of the iſlands, from which Europe had long received ſpiceries and other commodities, which it held in high eſtimation, though unacquainted with the particular countries to which it was indebted for thoſe precious productions; and he obtained information concerning ſeveral countries, which he did not viſit in perſon, particularly the iſland Zipangri, probably the ſame now known by the name of Japan *. On his return, he aſtoniſhed his contemporaries with his deſcriptions of vaſt regions, whoſe names had never been heard of in Europe, and with ſuch pompous accounts of their fertility, their populouſneſs, their opulence, the variety of their manufactures, and the extent of their trade, as roſe far above the conception of an uninformed age.

1322. About half a century after Marco Polo, Sir John Mandeville, an Engliſhman, encouraged by

* Viaggi di Marco Polo. Ramus, ii. 2. Bergeron, tom. ii.

his

his example, visited most of the countries in the east which he had described, and like him, published an account of them on his return *. The narrations of those early travellers abound with many wild incoherent tales, concerning giants, enchanters, and monsters: but they were not, from that circumstance, less acceptable to an ignorant age, which delighted in what was marvellous. The wonders which they told, mostly on hearsay, filled the multitude with admiration. The facts which they related from their own observation, attracted the attention of the more discerning. The former, which may be considered as the popular traditions and fables of the countries through which they had passed, were gradually disregarded as Europe advanced in knowledge. The latter, however incredible some of them may have appeared in their own time, have been confirmed by the observations of modern travellers. By means of both, however, the curiosity of mankind was excited with respect to the remote parts of the earth, their ideas were enlarged, and they were not only insensibly disposed to attempt new discoveries, but received such information as directed them to that particular course in which they were afterwards carried on.

and by the invention of the mariners compass.

While this spirit was gradually forming in Europe, a fortunate discovery was made, which contributed more than all the efforts and ingenuity of preceding ages, to improve and to extend navigation. That wonderful property of the magnet, by which it communicates such virtue to a slender rod of iron or needle, as to point towards the poles of the earth, was observed. The use which might be made of this in directing navigation was immediately perceived, and that most valuable, but now familiar instrument, the *mariners compass*, was form-

* Voyages and Travels, by Sir John Mandeville.

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ed. When, by means of it, navigators found that at all ſeaſons, and in every place, they could diſcover the north and ſouth with ſo much eaſe and accuracy, it became no longer neceſſary to depend merely on the light of the ſtars and the obſervation of the ſea coaſt. They gradually abandoned their ancient timid and lingering courſe along the ſhore, ventured boldly into the ocean, and relying on this new guide, could ſteer in the darkeſt night, and under the moſt cloudy ſky, with a ſecurity and preciſion hitherto unknown. The compaſs may be ſaid to have opened to man the dominion of the ſea, and to have put him in full poſſeſſion of the earth, by enabling him to every viſit part of it. Flavio Gioia, a citizen of Amalfi, a town of conſiderable trade in the kingdom of Naples, was the author of this great diſcovery, about the year one thouſand three hundred and two. It hath been often the fate of thoſe illuſtrious benefactors of mankind, who have enriched ſcience and improved the arts by their inventions, to derive more reputation than benefit from the happy efforts of their genius. But the lot of Gioia has been ſtill more cruel; through the inattention or ignorance of contemporary hiſtorians, he has been defrauded even of the fame to which he had ſuch a juſt title. We receive from them no information with reſpect to his profeſſion, his character, the preciſe time when he made this important diſcovery, and the accidents or enquiries which led to it: the knowledge of this event, though productive of greater effects than any recorded in the annals of the human race, is tranſmitted to us without any of thoſe circumſtances, which can gratify the curioſity that it naturally awakens *. Though the uſe of the compaſs might enable the Italians to perform the ſhort voyages to which they were

* Collinas & Trombellus de Acus nauticæ Inventore. Inſtit. Acad. Bonon. tom. ii. part iii. p. 372.

accuſtomed,

accuſtomed, with greater ſecurity and expedition, its influence was not ſo ſudden or extenſive, as immediately to render navigation adventurous, and to excite a ſpirit of diſcovery. Many cauſes combined in preventing this beneficial invention from producing its full effect inſtantaneouſly. Men relinquiſh ancient habits ſlowly, and with reluctance. They are averſe to new experiments, and venture upon them with timidity. The commercial jealouſy of the Italians, it is probable, laboured to conceal the happy diſcovery of their countryman from other nations. The art of ſteering by the compaſs, with ſuch ſkill and accuracy as to inſpire a full confidence in its direction, was acquired gradually. Sailors, long accuſtomed not to quit ſight of land, durſt not launch out at once and commit themſelves to unknown ſeas. Accordingly, near half a century elapſed, from the time of Gioia's diſcovery, before navigators ventured into any ſeas which they had not been accuſtomed to frequent.

Some appearance of a bolder ſpirit in navigation.

THE firſt appearance of a bolder ſpirit may be dated from the voyages of the Spaniards to the Canary or Fortunate Iſlands. By what accident they were led to the diſcovery of thoſe ſmall iſles, which lie near five hundred miles from the Spaniſh coaſt, and above a hundred and fifty miles from the coaſt of Africa, contemporary writers have not explained. But about the middle of the fourteenth century, the people of all the different kingdoms into which Spain was then divided, were accuſtomed to make piratical excurſions thither, in order to plunder the inhabitants, or to carry them off as ſlaves. Clement VI. in virtue of the right claimed by the holy ſee to diſpoſe of all countries poſſeſſed by infidels, erected thoſe iſles into a kingdom, in the year one thouſand three hundred and forty-four, and conferred it on Lewis de la Cerda, deſcended from

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from the royal family of Caſtile. But that unfortunate prince, deſtitute of power to aſſert his nominal title, having never viſited the Canaries, John de Bethencourt, a Norman baron, obtained a grant of them from Henry III. of Caſtile *. Bethencourt, with the valour and good fortune which diſtinguiſhed the adventurers of his country, attempted and effected the conqueſt, and the poſſeſſion of the Canaries remained for ſome time in his family, as a fief held of the crown of Caſtile. Previous to this expedition of Bethencourt, his countrymen are ſaid to have viſited the coaſt of Africa, and to have proceeded far to the ſouth of the Canary iſlands. But their voyages thither ſeem not to have been undertaken in conſequence of any public or regular plan for extending navigation and attempting new diſcoveries. They were either excurſions ſuggeſted by that roving piratical ſpirit, which deſcended to the Normans from their anceſtors, or the commercial enterpriſes of private merchants, which attracted ſo little notice, that hardly any memorial of them is to be found in contemporary authors. In a general ſurvey of the progreſs of diſcovery, it is ſufficient to have mentioned this event; and leaving it among thoſe of dubious exiſtence, or of ſmall importance, we may conclude, that though much additional information concerning the remote regions of the eaſt had been received by travellers who viſited them by land, navigation, at the beginning of the fifteenth century, had not advanced beyond the ſtate to which it had attained before the downfal of the Roman empire.

1365.

First regular plan of diſcovery,

At length the period arrived, when Providence decreed that men were to paſs the limits within which they had been ſo long confined, and open to themſelves a more ample field wherein to diſplay their talents, their enterpriſe, and courage.

* Viera y Clavijo Notic. de la Hiſtor. de Canaria, I. 268, &c. Glas Hiſt. c. 1.

The

The firſt conſiderable efforts towards this were not made by any of the more powerful ſtates of Europe, or by thoſe who had applied to navigation with the greateſt aſſiduity and ſucceſs. The glory of leading the way in this new career was reſerved for Portugal, one of the ſmalleſt and moſt inconſiderable of the European kingdoms. As the attempts of the Portugueſe to acquire the knowledge of thoſe parts of the globe with which mankind were then unacquainted, not only improved and extended the art of navigation, but rouſed ſuch a ſpirit of curioſity and enterpriſe, as led to the diſcovery of the new world of which I propoſe to write the hiſtory, it is neceſſary to take a view of the riſe, the progreſs and ſucceſs of their various naval operations. It was in this ſchool that the diſcoverer of America was trained; and unleſs we trace the ſteps by which his inſtructors and guides advanced, it will be impoſſible to comprehend the circumſtances which ſuggeſted the idea, or facilitated the execution of his great deſign.

formed by the Portugueſe.

VARIOUS circumſtances prompted the Portugueſe to exert their activity in this new direction, and enabled them to accompliſh undertakings apparently ſuperior to the natural force of their monarchy. The kings of Portugal having driven the Moors out of their dominions, had acquired power, as well as glory, by the ſucceſs of their arms againſt the infidels. By their victories over them, they had extended the royal authority beyond the narrow limits within which it was originally circumſcribed in Portugal, as well as in other feudal kingdoms. They had the command of the national force, could rouſe it to act with united vigour, and, after the expulſion of the Moors, could employ it without dread of interruption from any domeſtic enemy. By the perpetual hoſtilities carried on for

Circumſtances which led to this.

ſeveral

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several centuries against the Mahometans, the martial and adventurous spirit that distinguished all the European nations during the middle ages, was improved and heightened among the Portuguese. A fierce civil war, towards the close of the fourteenth century, occasioned by a disputed succession, augmented the military ardour of the nation, and formed or called forth men of such active and daring genius, as are fit for bold undertakings. The situation of the kingdom, bounded on every side by the dominions of a more powerful neighbour, did not afford free scope to the activity of the Portuguese by land, as the strength of their monarchy was no match for that of Castile. But Portugal was a maritime state, in which there were many commodious harbours; the people had begun to make some progress in the knowledge and practice of navigation; and the sea was open to them, presenting the only field of enterprise in which they could distinguish themselves.

First attempt.

Such was the state of Portugal, and such the disposition of the people, when John I. surnamed the Bastard, obtained secure possession of the crown by the peace concluded with Castile in the year one thousand four hundred and eleven. He was a prince of great merit, who, by superior courage and abilities, had opened his way to a throne which of right did not belong to him. He instantly perceived that it would be impossible to preserve public order, or domestic tranquillity, without finding some employment for the restless spirit of his subjects. With this view, he assembled a numerous fleet at Lisbon, composed of all the ships that he could fit out in his own kingdom, and of many hired from foreigners. This great armament was
1412. destined to attack the Moors settled on the coast of Barbary. While it was equipping, a few vessels were appointed to sail along the western shore

ſhore of Africa bounded by the Atlantic ocean, and to diſcover the unknown countries ſituated there. From this inconſiderable attempt, we may date the commencement of that ſpirit of diſcovery which opened the barriers that had ſo long ſhut out mankind from the knowledge of one half of the terreſtrial globe.

At the time when John ſent forth theſe ſhips on this new voyage, the art of navigation was ſtill very imperfect. Though Africa lay ſo near to Portugal, and the fertility of the countries already known on that continent invited men to make farther diſcoveries, the Portugueſe had never ventured to ſail beyond Cape *Non*. That promontory, as its name imports, was hitherto conſidered as a boundary which could not be paſſed. But the nations of Europe had now acquired as much knowledge, as emboldened them to diſregard the prejudices and to correct the errors of their anceſtors. The long reign of ignorance, the conſtant enemy of every curious inquiry, and of every new undertaking, was approaching to its period. The light of ſcience began to dawn. The works of the ancient Greeks and Romans began to be read with admiration and profit. The ſciences cultivated by the Arabians were introduced into Europe by the Moors ſettled in Spain and Portugal, and by the Jews, who were very numerous in both theſe kingdoms. Geometry, aſtronomy, and geography, the ſciences on which the art of navigation is founded, became the objects of ſtudious attention. The memory of the diſcoveries made by the ancients was revived, and the progreſs of their navigation and commerce began to be traced. Some of the cauſes which, during this century and the laſt, have obſtructed the cultivation of ſcience in Portugal, did not exiſt, or did not operate in the

ſame

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ſame manner, in the fifteenth century *; and the Portugueſe, at that period, ſeem to have kept pace with other nations on this ſide of the Alps in literary purſuits.

Its ſucceſs.

As the genius of the age favoured the execution of that new undertaking, to which the peculiar ſtate of their country invited the Portugueſe, it proved ſucceſsful. The veſſels ſent on the diſcovery doubled that formidable Cape, which had terminated the progreſs of former navigators, and proceeded a hundred and ſixty miles beyond it, to Cape Bojador. As its rocky cliffs, which ſtretched a conſiderable way into the Atlantic, appeared more dreadful than the promontory which they had paſſed, the Portugueſe commanders durſt not attempt to ſail round it, but returned to Liſbon, more ſatisfied with having advanced ſo far, than aſhamed at having ventured no farther.

Prince Henry the director of the Portugueſe diſcoveries.

INCONSIDERABLE as this voyage was, it increaſed the paſſion for diſcovery, which began to ariſe in Portugal. The extraordinary ſucceſs of the king's expedition againſt the Moors of Barbary, added ſtrength to the ſpirit of enterpriſe in the nation and puſhed it on to new undertakings. In order to render theſe ſucceſsful, it was neceſſary that they ſhould be conducted by a perſon who poſſeſſed abilities capable of diſcerning what was attainable, who enjoyed leiſure to form a regular ſyſtem for proſecuting diſcovery, and who was animated with ardour that would perſevere in ſpite of obſtacles and repulſes. Happily for Portugal, ſhe found all thoſe qualities in Henry duke of Viſeo, the fourth ſon of king John by Philippa of Lancaſter, ſiſter of Henry IV. king of England. That prince, in his early youth, having accompanied his father in his

1415.

* See NOTE IX.

expedition

expedition to Barbary, diſtinguiſhed himſelf by many deeds of valour. To the martial ſpirit, which was the characteriſtic of every man of noble birth at that time, he added all the accompliſhments of a more enlightened and poliſhed age. He cultivated the arts and ſciences, which were then unknown and deſpiſed by perſons of his rank. He applied with peculiar fondneſs to the ſtudy of geography; and by the inſtruction of able maſters, as well as by the accounts of travellers, he early acquired ſuch knowledge of the habitable globe, as diſcovered the great probability of finding new and opulent countries, by ſailing along the coaſt of Africa. Such an object was formed to awaken the enthuſiaſm and ardour of a youthful mind, and he engaged with the utmoſt zeal to patronize a deſign that might prove as beneficial, as it appeared to be ſplendid and honourable. In order that he might purſue this great ſcheme without interruption, he retired from court immediately after his return from Africa, and fixed his reſidence at Sagres, near Cape St. Vincent, where the proſpect of the Atlantic ocean invited his thoughts continually towards his favourite project, and encouraged him to execute it. In this retreat he was attended by ſome of the moſt learned men in his country, who aided him in his reſearches. He applied for information to the Moors of Barbary, who were accuſtomed to travel by land into the interior provinces of Africa, in queſt of ivory, gold-duſt, and other rich commodities. He conſulted the Jews ſettled in Portugal. By promiſes, rewards, and marks of reſpect, he allured into his ſervice ſeveral perſons, foreigners as well as Portugueſe, who were eminent for their ſkill in navigation. In taking thoſe preparatory ſteps, the great abilities of the prince were ſeconded by his private virtues. His integrity, his affability, his reſpect for religion, his zeal for the honour of his country, engaged

perſons

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perſons of all ranks to applaud his deſign, and to favour the execution of it. His ſchemes were allowed by his countrymen to proceed neither from ambition, nor the deſire of wealth, but to flow from the warm benevolence of a heart eager to promote the happineſs of mankind, and which juſtly intitled him to aſſume a motto for his device, that deſcribed the quality by which he wiſhed to be diſtinguiſhed, *the talent of doing good.*

Diſcovery of Porto Santo. 1418.

His firſt effort, as is uſual at the commencement of any new undertaking was extremely inconſiderable. He fitted out a ſingle ſhip, and giving the command of it to John Gonzalez Zarco and Triſtan Vaz, two gentlemen of his houſehold, who voluntarily offered to conduct the enterpriſe, he inſtructed them to uſe their utmoſt efforts to double Cape Bojador, and thence to ſteer towards the ſouth. They, according to the mode of navigation which ſtill prevailed, held their courſe along the ſhore: and by following that direction, they muſt have encountered almoſt inſuperable difficulties in attempting to paſs Cape Bojador. But fortune came in aid to their want of ſkill, and prevented the voyage from being altogether fruitleſs. A ſudden ſquall of wind aroſe, drove them out to ſea, and when they expected every moment to periſh, landed them on an unknown iſland, which from their happy eſcape they named *Porto Santo.* In the infancy of navigation, the diſcovery of this ſmall iſland appeared a matter of ſuch moment, that they inſtantly returned to Portugal with the good tidings, and were received by Henry with the applauſe and honour due to fortunate adventurers. This faint dawn of ſucceſs filled a mind ardent in the purſuit of a favourite object with ſuch ſanguine hopes as were ſufficient encouragement to proceed. Next year, Henry ſent out three ſhips under the ſame commanders, to whom he joined Bartholomew Pereſtrello, in order to take poſ-

1419.

ſeſſion

ſeſſion of the iſland which they had diſcovered. When they began to ſettle in Porto Santo, they obſerved towards the ſouth a fixed ſpot in the horizon, like a ſmall black cloud. By degrees, they were led to conjecture that it might be land, and ſteering towards it, they arrived at a conſiderable iſland, uninhabited, and covered with wood, which on that account they called *Madeira* *. As it was Henry's chief object to render his diſcoveries uſeful to his country, he immediately equipped a fleet to carry a colony of Portugueſe to theſe iſlands. By his provident care, they were furniſhed not only with the ſeeds, plants, and domeſtic animals common in Europe; but as he foreſaw that the warmth of the climate and fertility of the ſoil would prove favourable to the rearing of other productions, he procured ſlips of the vine from the iſland of Cyprus, the rich wines of which were then in great requeſt, and plants of the ſugar-cane from Sicily, into which it had been lately introduced. Theſe throve ſo proſperouſly in this new country, that the benefit of cultivating them was immediataly perceived, and the ſugar and wine of Madeira quickly became conſiderable articles in the commerce of Portugal †.

Of Madeira.

1420.

As ſoon as the advantages derived from this firſt ſettlement to the weſt of the European continent began to be felt, the ſpirit of diſcovery appeared leſs chimerical, and became more adventurous. By their voyages to Madeira, the Portugueſe were gradually accuſtomed to a bolder navigation, and inſtead of creeping ſervilely along the coaſt, ventured into the open ſea. In conſequence of taking this courſe, Gilianez, who commanded one of prince

Double Cape Bojador.

* Hiſtorical Relation of the firſt Diſcovery of Madeira, tranſlated from the Portugueſe of Fran. Alcafarano. p. 15, &c.

† Lud. Guicciardini Deſcritt. de Paeſi Baſſi, p. 180, 181.

Henry's

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Henry's ſhips, doubled Cape Bojador, the boundary of the Portugueſe navigation upwards of twenty years, and which had hitherto been deemed unpaſſable. This ſucceſsful voyage, which the ignorance of the age placed on a level with the moſt famous exploits recorded in hiſtory, opened a new ſphere to navigation, as it diſcovered the vaſt continent of Africa, ſtill waſhed by the Atlantic ocean, and ſtretching towards the ſouth. Part of this was ſoon explored; the Portugueſe advanced within the tropics, and in the ſpace of a few years they diſcovered the river Senegal, and all the coaſt extending from Cape Blanco to Cape de Verd.

1433.

Advance within the tropics.

Aſtoniſhed at what they diſcovered there.

HITHERTO the Portugueſe had been guided in their diſcoveries, or encouraged to attempt them, by the light and information which they received from the works of the ancient mathematicians and geographers. But, when they began to enter the torrid zone, the notion which prevailed among the ancients, that the exceſſive heat, which reigned perpetually there, was ſo fatal to life as to render it uninhabitable, deterred them, for ſome time, from proceeding. Their own obſervations, when they firſt ventured into this unknown and formidable region, tended to confirm the opinion of antiquity concerning the violent operation of the direct rays of the ſun. As far as the river Senegal, the Portugueſe had found the coaſt of Africa inhabited by people reſembling the Moors of Barbary. When they advanced to the ſouth of that river, the human form ſeemed to put on a new appearance. They beheld men with ſkins black as ebony, with ſhort curled hair, flat noſes, thick lips, and all the peculiar features which are now known to diſtinguiſh the race of negroes. This ſurpriſing alteration they naturally attributed to the influence of heat,

heat, and if they ſhould advance nearer to the line, they began to dread that its effects would be ſtill more fatal. Thoſe dangers were exaggerated, and many other objections againſt attempting farther diſcoveries were propoſed by ſome of the grandees, who, from ignorance, from envy, or from that cold timid prudence which rejects whatever has the air of novelty or enterpriſe, had hitherto condemned all prince Henry's ſchemes. They repreſented, that it was altogether chimerical to expect any advantage from countries ſituated in that region which the wiſdom and experience of antiquity had pronounced to be unfit for the habitation of men; that their forefathers, ſatisfied with cultivating the territory which Providence had allotted them, did not waſte the ſtrength of the kingdom by fruitleſs projects, in queſt of new ſettlements; that Portugal was already exhauſted by the expence of attempts to diſcover lands which either did not exiſt, or which nature deſtined to remain unknown; and was drained of men, who might have been employed in undertakings attended with more certain ſucceſs, and productive of greater benefit. But neither their appeal to the authority of the ancients, nor their reaſonings concerning the intereſt of Portugal, made any impreſſion upon the determined philoſophic mind of prince Henry. The diſcoveries which he had already made convinced him that the ancients had little more than a conjectural knowledge of the torrid zone. He was no leſs ſatisfied that the political arguments of his opponents with reſpect to the intereſt of Portugal were malevolent and ill-founded. In thoſe ſentiments he was ſtrenuouſly ſupported by his brother Pedro, who governed the kingdom as guardian of their nephew Alphonſo V. who had ſucceeded to the throne during his minority; and inſtead of ſlackening his efforts, 1438.

Henry

BOOK I.

Henry continued to purſue his diſcoveries with freſh ardour.

Papal grant to Portugal of what countries it ſhould diſcover.

But, in order to ſilence all the murmurs of oppoſition, he endeavoured to obtain the ſanction of the higheſt authority in favour of his operations. With this view, he applied to the Pope, and repreſented, in pompous terms, the pious and unwearied zeal, with which he had exerted himſelf during twenty years, in diſcovering unknown countries, the wretched inhabitants of which were utter ſtrangers to true religion, wandering in heathen darkneſs, or led aſtray by the deluſions of Mahomet. He beſought the holy father, to whom, as the vicar of Chriſt, all the kingdoms of the earth were ſubject, to confer on the crown of Portugal a right to all the countries poſſeſſed by Infidels, which ſhould be diſcovered by the induſtry of its ſubjects, and ſubdued by the force of its arms. He intreated him to enjoin all Chriſtian powers, under the higheſt penalties, not to moleſt the Portugueſe while engaged in this laudable enterpriſe, and to prohibit them from ſettling in any of the countries which they ſhould diſcover. He promiſed that, in all their expeditions, it ſhould be the chief object of the Portugueſe to ſpread the knowledge of the Chriſtian religion, to eſtabliſh the authority of the holy ſee, and to increaſe the flock of the univerſal paſtor. As it was by improving with dexterity every favourable conjuncture for acquiring new powers, that the court of Rome had gradually extended its uſurpations, Eugene IV. the pontiff to whom this application was made, eagerly ſeized the opportunity that now preſented itſelf. He inſtantly perceived that by complying with prince Henry's requeſt, he might exerciſe a prerogative no leſs flattering in its own

own nature, than likely to prove beneficial in its conſequences. A Bull was accordingly iſſued, in which, after applauding in the ſtrongeſt terms the paſt efforts of the Portugueſe, and exhorting them to proceed in that laudable career on which they had entered, he granted them an excluſive right to all the countries which they ſhould diſcover, from Cape Non to the continent of India.

EXTRAVAGANT as this donation, comprehending ſuch a large portion of the habitable globe, would now appear even in Catholic countries, no perſon in the fifteenth century doubted that the pope, in the plenitude of his apoſtolic power, had a right to confer it. Prince Henry was ſoon ſenſible of the advantages which he derived from this tranſaction. His ſchemes were authoriſed and ſanctified by the bull approving of them. The ſpirit of diſcovery was connected with zeal for religion, which, in that age, was a principle of ſuch activity and vigour, as to influence the conduct of nations. All Chriſtians princes were deterred from intruding into thoſe countries which the Portugueſe had diſcovered, or from interrupting the progreſs of their navigation and conqueſts *.

Fame and progreſs of the Portugueſe dicoveries.

THE fame of the Portugueſe voyages ſoon ſpread over Europe. Men, long accuſtomed to circumſcribe the activity and knowledge of the human mind within the limits to which they had been hitherto confined, were aſtoniſhed to behold the ſphere of navigation ſo ſuddenly enlarged, and a proſpect opened of viſiting regions of the globe, the exiſtence of which was unknown in former times. The learned and ſpeculative reaſoned and formed theories concerning thoſe unexpected diſcoveries. The vulgar inquired and wondered; and

* See NOTE X.

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enterprising adventurers crouded from every part of Europe, soliciting prince Henry to employ them in this honourable service. Many Venetians and Genoese, in particular, who were, at that time, superior to all other nations in the science of naval affairs, entered aboard the Portuguese ships, and acquired a more perfect and extensive knowledge of their profession in that new school of navigation. In emulation of these foreigners, the Portuguese exerted their own talents. The nation seconded the designs of the prince. Private merchants formed companies, with a view to search for unknown countries. The Cape de Verd islands, which lie off the promontory of that name, were discovered, and soon after, the isles called Azores. As the former of these are above three hundred miles from the African coast, and the latter nine hundred miles from any continent, it is evident, by their venturing so boldly into the open seas, that the Portuguese had, by this time, improved greatly in the art of navigation.

1446.

1449.

Death of prince Henry. 1463.

While the passion for engaging in new undertakings was thus warm and active, it received an unfortunate check by the death of prince Henry, whose superior knowledge had hitherto directed all the operations of the discoverers, and whose patronage had encouraged and protected them. It is true, that during his life, the Portuguese, in their utmost progress towards the south, did not advance within five degrees of the equinoctial line; and, after their continued exertions for half a century, hardly fifteen hundred miles of the coast of Africa were discovered. To an age acquainted with the efforts of navigation in its state of maturity and improvement, those essays of its early years must necessarily appear feeble and unskilful. But, inconsiderable as they may appear, they were sufficient

From 1412 to 1463.

to

to turn the curioſity of the European nations into a new channel, to excite an enterpriſing ſpirit, and to point the way to future diſcoveries. BOOK I.

ALPHONSO, who poſſeſſed the throne of Portugal at the time of prince Henry's death, was ſo much engaged in ſupporting his pretenſions to the crown of Caſtile, or in carrying on his expeditions againſt the Moors in Barbary, that the force of his kingdom being exerted in other operations, he could not proſecute the diſcoveries in Africa with ardour. He committed the conduct of them to Fernando Gomez, a merchant in Liſbon, to whom he granted an excluſive right of commerce with all the countries of which prince Henry had taken poſſeſſion. Under the reſtraint and oppreſſion of a monopoly, the ſpirit of diſcovery languiſhed. It ceaſed to be a national object, and became the concern of a private man, more attentive to his own gain, than to the glory of his country. Some progreſs, however, was made. The Portugueſe ventured at length to croſs the line, and, to their aſtoniſhment, found that region of the torrid zone, which was ſuppoſed to be ſcorched with intolerable heat, to be not only habitable, but populous and fertile. The paſſion for diſcovery languiſhes for ſome time. 1471.

JOHN II. who ſucceeded his father Alphonſo, poſſeſſed talents capable both of forming and executing great deſigns. As part of his revenues, while prince, had ariſen from duties on the trade with the newly-diſcovered countries, this naturally turned his attention towards them, and ſatisfied him with reſpect to their utility and importance. In proportion as his knowledge of theſe countries extended, the poſſeſſion of them appeared to be of greater conſequence. While the Portugueſe proceeded along the coaſt of Africa, from Cape Non 1481. Revives with additional ardour

BOOK I. to the river of Senegal, they found all that extenſive tract to be ſandy, barren, and thinly inhabited by a wretched people, profeſſing the Mahometan religion, and ſubject to the vaſt empire of Morocco. But to the ſouth of that river, the power and religion of the Mahometans were unknown. The country was divided into ſmall independent principalities, the population was conſiderable, the ſoil fertile *, and the Portugueſe ſoon diſcovered that it produced ivory, rich gums, gold, and other valuable commodities. By the acquiſition of theſe, commerce was enlarged, and became adventurous. Men, animated and rendered active by the certain proſpect of gain, purſued diſcovery with greater eargerneſs, than when they were excited only by curioſity and hope.

Its progreſs. THIS ſpirit derived no ſmall reinforcement of vigour from the countenance of ſuch a monarch as John. He declared himſelf the patron of every attempt towards diſcovery and promoted it with all the ardour of his grand-uncle prince Henry, and
1484. with ſuperior power. The effects of this were immediately felt. A powerful fleet was fitted out, which, after diſcovering the kingdoms of Benin and Congo, advanced above fifteeen hundred miles beyond the line, and the Portugueſe, for the firſt time, beheld a new heaven, and obſerved the ſtars of another hemiſphere. John was not only ſolicitous to diſcover, but attentive to ſecure the poſſeſſion of thoſe countries. He built forts on the coaſt of Guinea; he ſent out colonies to ſettle there; he eſtabliſhed a commercial intercourſe with the more powerful kingdoms; he endeavoured to render

* Navigatio Aloyſii Cadamuſti apud Novum Orbem Grynæi, p. 2 18. Navigat. all Iſola di San Tome per un piloto Portugh. Ramuſio. i. 115.

ſuch

ſuch as were feeble or divided, tributary to the crown of Portugal. Some of the petty princes voluntarily acknowledged themſelves his vaſſals. Others were compelled to do ſo by force of arms. A regular and well digeſted ſyſtem was formed with reſpect to this new object of policy, and by firmly adhering to it, the Portugueſe power and commerce in Africa were eſtabliſhed upon a ſolid foundation.

Hopes of diſcovering a new route to the Eaſt Indies.

By their conſtant intercourſe with the people of Africa the Portugueſe gradually acquired ſome knowledge of thoſe parts of that country which they had not viſited. The information which they received from the natives, added to what they had obſerved in their own voyages began to open proſpects more extenſive, and to ſuggeſt the idea of ſchemes more important, than thoſe which had hitherto allured and occupied them. They had detected the error of the ancients concerning the nature of the torrid zone. They found, as they proceeded ſouthwards, that the continent of Africa, inſtead of extending in breadth, according to the doctrine of Ptolemy *, at that time the oracle and guide of the learned in the ſtudy of greography, appeared ſenſibly to contract itſelf, and to bend towards the eaſt. This induced them to give credit to the accounts of the ancient Phenician voyages round Africa, which had long been deemed fabulous, and led them to conceive hopes that by following the ſame route, they might arrive at the Eaſt Indies, and engroſs that commerce, which has been the ſource of wealth and power to every nation poſſeſſed of it. The comprehenſive genius of prince Henry, as we may conjecture from the words of the pope's bull, had early formed ſome idea of this navigation. All the Portugueſe pilots

* Vide Nov. Orbis Tabul. Geograph. Secund. Ptolem. Amſt. 1730.

and

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and mathematicians now concurred in repreſenting it as practicable. The king entered with warmth into their ſentiments, and began to concert meaſures for this arduous and important voyage.

Schemes for accompliſhing this.

BEFORE his preparations for this expedition were finiſhed accounts were tranſmitted from Africa, that various nations along the coaſt had mentioned a mighty kingdom ſituated on their continent, at a great diſtance towards the eaſt, the king of which, according to their deſcription, profeſſed the Chriſtian religion. The Portugueſe monarch immediately concluded, that this muſt be the emperor of Abyſſinia, to whom the Europeans, ſeduced by a miſtake of Rubruquis, Marco Polo, and other travellers to the eaſt, abſurdly gave the name Preſter or Preſbyter John; and as he hoped to receive information and aſſiſtance from a Chriſtian prince, in proſecuting a ſcheme that tended to propagate their common faith, he reſolved to open, if poſſible, ſome intercourſe with his court. With this view, he made choice of Pedro de Covillam and Alphonſo de Payva, who were perfect maſters of the Arabic language, and ſent them into the eaſt, to ſearch for the reſidence of this unknown potentate, and to make him proffers of friendſhip. They had it in charge, likewiſe, to procure whatever intelligence the nations which they viſited could ſupply, with reſpect to the trade of India, and the courſe of navigation to that continent *.

Voyage of Bartholomew Diaz.

WHILE John made this new attempt by land, to obtain ſome knowledge of the country, which he wiſhed ſo ardently to diſcover, he did not neglect the proſecution of this great deſign by ſea. The

1486. conduct of this voyage, the moſt arduous and important which the Portugueſe had ever projected, was

* Faria y Souſa Port. Aſia, vol. i. p. 26. Lafitau Decouv. de Port. i. 46.

committed

committed to Bartholomew Diaz, an officer whoſe ſagacity, experience, and fortitude rendered him equal to the undertaking. He ſtretched boldly towards the ſouth, and proceeding beyond the utmoſt limits to which his countrymen had hitherto advanced, diſcovered near a thouſand miles of new country. Neither the danger to which he was expoſed, by a ſucceſſion of violent tempeſts in unknown ſeas, and by the frequent mutinies of his crew, nor the calamities of famine which he ſuffered from loſing his ſtore-ſhip, could deter him from proſecuting his enterpriſe. In recompence of his labours and perſeverance, he at laſt deſcried that lofty promontory which bounds Africa to the ſouth. But to deſcry it, was all that was in his power. The violence of the winds, the ſhattered condition of his ſhips, and the turbulent ſpirit of his ſailors, compelled him to return, after a voyage of ſixteen months, in which he diſcovered an extent of country far greater than any preceding navigator. Diaz had called the promontory which terminated his voyage *Cabo Tormentoſo*, or the ſtormy Cape; but the king, his maſter, as he now entertained no doubt of having found the long deſired route to India, gave it a name more inviting, and of better omen, *The Cape of Good Hope* *.

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More certain proſpects of ſucceſs.

THOSE ſanguine expectations of ſucceſs were confirmed by the intelligence which John received over land, in conſequence of his embaſſy to Abyſſinia. Covillam and Payva, in obedience to their maſter's inſtructions, had repaired to Grand Cairo. From that city they travelled along with a caravan of Egyptian merchants, and croſſed over to Aden, on the Red Sea. There they ſeparated; Payva ſailed directly to Abyſſinia; Covillam embarked for the Eaſt Indies, and having viſited Calecut, Goa,

* Faria y Souſa Port. Aſia, vol. i. p. 26.

and

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and other cities on the Malabar coaſt, returned to Sofala, on the eaſt ſide of Africa, and thence to Grand Cairo, which Payva and he had fixed upon as their place of rendezvous. Unfortunately the former was cruelly murdered in Abyſſinia, but Covillam found at Cairo two Portugueſe Jews, whom John, whoſe provident ſagacity attended to every circumſtance that could facilitate the execution of his ſchemes, had diſpatched after them, in order to receive a detail of their proceedings, and to communicate to them new inſtructions. By one of theſe Jews, Covillam tranſmitted to Portugal a journal of his travels by ſea and land, his remarks upon the trade of India, together with exact maps of the coaſts on which he had touched; and from what he himſelf had obſerved, as well as from the information of ſkilful ſeamen in different countries, he concluded, that by ſailing round Africa, a paſſage might be found to the Eaſt Indies *.

Preparations for another voyage.

THE happy coincidence of Covillam's opinion and report, with the diſcoveries which Diaz had lately made, left hardly any ſhadow of doubt with reſpect to the poſſibility of ſailing from Europe to India. But the vaſt length of the voyage, and the furious ſtorms which Diaz had encountered near the Cape of Good Hope, alarmed and intimidated the Portugueſe to ſuch a degree, although by long experience they were now become adventurous and ſkilful mariners, that ſome time was requiſite to prepare their minds for this dangerous and extraordinary voyage. The courage, however, and authority of the monarch, gradually diſpelled the vain fears of his ſubjects, or made it neceſſary to conceal them. As John thought himſelf now upon the eve of accompliſhing that great deſign, which

* Faria y Souſa Port. Aſia, vol. i. p. 27. Lafitau Decouv. i. 48.

had

had been the principal object of his reign, his earneſtneſs in proſecuting it became ſo vehement, that it occupied his thoughts by day, and bereaved him of ſleep through the night. While he was taking every precaution that his wiſdom and experience could ſuggeſt, in order to enſure the ſucceſs of the expedition, which was to decide concerning the fate of his favourite project, the fame of the vaſt diſcoveries which the Portugueſe had already made, the reports concerning the extraordinary intelligence which they had received from the eaſt, and the proſpect of the voyage which they now meditated, drew the attention of all the European nations, and held them in ſuſpence and expectation. By ſome, the maritime ſkill and navigation of the Portugueſe were compared with thoſe of the Phenicians and Carthaginians, and exalted above them. Others formed conjectures concerning the revolutions which the ſucceſs of their ſchemes might occaſion in the courſe of trade, and the political ſtate of Europe. The Venetians began to be diſquieted with the apprehenſion of loſing their Indian commerce, the monopoly of which was the chief ſource of their power as well as of opulence, and the Portugueſe already enjoyed in fancy, the wealth of the eaſt. But, during this interval, which gave ſuch ſcope to the various workings of curioſity, of hope and of fear, an account was brought to Europe of an event no leſs extraordinary than unexpected, the diſcovery of a New World ſituated in the weſt, and the eyes and admiration of mankind turned immediately towards that great object.

The attention of mankind fixed upon it.

Suddenly turned to a new object.

THE

THE

HISTORY

OF

AMERICA.

BOOK II.

AMONG the foreigners whom the fame of the diſcoveries made by the Portugueſe had allured into their ſervice, was Chriſtopher Columbus, a ſubject of the republic of Genoa. Neither the time nor place of his birth are known with certainty *; but he was deſcended of an honourable family, though reduced to indigence by various misfortunes. His anceſtors having betaken themſelves for ſubſiſtence to a ſeafaring life, Columbus diſcovered, in his early youth, the peculiar character and talents which mark out a man for that profeſſion. His parents, inſtead of thwarting this original propenſity of his mind, ſeem to have encouraged and confirmed it, by the education which they gave him. After acquiring ſome knowledge of the Latin tongue, the only language in which ſcience was taught at that time, he was inſtructed in geometry,

Birth and education of Columbus.

* See NOTE XI.

coſmography,

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cosmography, astronomy, and the art of drawing. To these he applied with such ardour and predilection, on account of their connection with navigation, his favourite object, that he advanced with rapid proficiency in the study of them. Thus qualified, he went to sea at the age of fourteen, and began his career on that element which conducted him to so much glory. His early voyages were to those ports in the Mediterranean which his countrymen the Genoese frequented. This being a sphere too narrow for his active mind, he made an excursion to the northern seas, and visited the coast of Iceland, to which the English and other nations had begun to resort on account of its fishery. As navigation, in every direction, was now become enterprising, he proceeded beyond that island, the Thule of the ancients, and advanced several degrees within the polar circle. Having satisfied his curiosity by a voyage which tended more to enlarge its knowledge of naval affairs, than to improve his fortune, he entered into the service of a famous sea-captain, of his own name and family. This man commanded a small squadron, fitted out at his own expence, and by cruising sometimes against the Mahometans, sometimes against the Venetians, the rivals of his country in trade, had acquired both wealth and reputation. With him Columbus continued for several years, no less distinguished for his courage, than for his experience as a sailor. At length, in an obstinate engagement, off the coast of Portugal, with some Venetian caravels, returning richly laden from the Low Countries, the vessel on board which he served took fire, together with one of the enemy's ships, to which it was fast grappled. In this dreadful extremity his intrepidity and presence of mind did not forsake him. He threw himself into the sea, laid hold of a floating oar, and by the support of it, and his dexterity in swimming,

1461.

1467.

ſwimming, he reached the ſhore, though above two leagues diſtant, and ſaved a life reſerved for great undertakings *.

He enters into the Portugueſe ſervice.

As ſoon as he recovered ſtrength for the journey, he repaired to Liſbon, where many of his countrymen were ſettled. They ſoon conceived ſuch a favourable opinion of his merit, as well as talents, that they warmly ſolicited him to remain in that kingdom, where his naval ſkill and experience could not fail of rendering him conſpicuous. To every adventurer, animated either with curioſity to viſit new countries, or with ambition to diſtinguiſh himſelf, the Portugueſe ſervice was at that time extremely inviting. Columbus liſtened with a favourable ear to the advice of his friends, and having gained the eſteem of a Portugueſe lady, whom he married, fixed his reſidence in Liſbon. This alliance, inſtead of detaching him from a ſeafaring life, contributed to enlarge the ſphere of his naval knowledge, and to excite a deſire of extending it ſtill farther. His wife was a daughter of Bartholomew Pereſtrello, one of the captains employed by prince Henry in his early navigations, and who, under his protection, had diſcovered and planted the iſlands of Porto Santo and Madeira. Columbus got poſſeſſion of the journals and charts of this experienced navigator, and from them he learned the courſe which the Portugueſe had held in making their diſcoveries, as well as the various circumſtances which guided or encouraged them in their attempts. The ſtudy of theſe gratified and inflamed his favourite paſſion; and while he contemplated the maps, and read the deſcriptions of the new countries which Pereſtrello had ſeen, his impatience to viſit them became irreſiſtible. In order to indulge it, he made a voyage to Madeira, and continued during ſeveral years to trade with

* Life of Columbus, c. v.

that

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that iſland, with the Canaries, the Azores, the ſettlements in Guinea, and all other places which the Portugueſe had diſcovered on the continent of Africa *.

The effects of their diſcoveries upon him.

By the experience which Columbus acquired, during ſuch a variety of voyages to almoſt every part of the globe with which, at that time, any intercourſe was carried on by ſea, he was now become one of the moſt ſkilful navigators in Europe. But not ſatisfied with that praiſe, his ambition aimed at ſomething more. The ſucceſsful progreſs of the Portugueſe navigators had awakened a ſpirit of curioſity and emulation, which ſet every man of ſcience upon examining all the circumſtances that led to the diſcoveries which they had made, or that afforded a proſpect of ſucceeding in any new and bolder undertaking. The mind of Columbus, naturally inquiſitive, capable of deep reflection, and turned to ſpeculations of this kind, was ſo often employed in revolving the principles upon which the Portugueſe had founded their ſchemes of diſcovery, and the mode in which they had carried them on, that he gradually began to form an idea of improving upon their plan, and of accompliſhing diſcoveries which hitherto they had attempted in vain.

He forms the idea of a new courſe to India.

To find out a paſſage by ſea to the Eaſt Indies, was the great object in view at that period. From the time that the Portugueſe doubled Cape de Verd, this was the point at which they aimed in all their navigations, and, in compariſon with it, all their diſcoveries in Africa appeared inconſiderable. The fertility and riches of India had been known for many ages; its ſpices and other valuable commodities were in high requeſt throughout Europe, and the vaſt wealth of the Venetians,

* Life of Columbus, c. iv. v.

ariſing

ariſing from their having engroſſed this trade, had the envy of all nations. But how intent ſoever the Portugueſe were upon diſcovering a new route to thoſe deſirable regions, they ſearched for it only by ſteering towards the ſouth, in hopes of arriving at India, by turning to the eaſt, after they had ſailed round the farther extremity of Africa. This courſe, however, was ſtill unknown, and even if diſcovered, was of ſuch immenſe length, that a voyage from Europe to India muſt have appeared an undertaking extremely arduous, and of very uncertain iſſue. More than half a century had been employed in advancing from Cape Non to the equator; a much longer ſpace of time might elapſe before the more extenſive navigation from that to India could be accompliſhed. Theſe reflections upon the uncertainty, the danger and tedioufneſs of the courſe which the Portugueſe were purſuing, naturally led Columbus to conſider whether a ſhorter and more direct paſſage to the Eaſt Indies might not be found out. And after revolving long and ſeriouſly every circumſtance ſuggeſted by his ſuperior knowledge in the theory as well as practice of navigation, after comparing attentively the obſervations of modern pilots with the hints and conjectures of ancient authors, he at laſt concluded, that by ſailing directly towards the weſt, acroſs the Atlantic ocean, new countries, which probably formed a part of the vaſt continent of India, muſt infallibly be diſcovered.

The principles on which his theory was founded.

PRINCIPLES and arguments of various kinds, and derived from different ſources, induced him to adopt this opinion ſeemingly as chimerical as it was new and extraordinary. The ſpherical figure of the earth was known, and its magnitude aſcertained with ſome degree of accuracy. From this it was evident, that the continents of Europe, Aſia,

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Aſia, and Africa, formed but a ſmall portion of the terraqueous globe. It was ſuitable to our ideas concerning the wiſdom and beneficence of the Author of Nature, to believe that the vaſt ſpace ſtill unexplored, was not covered entirely by a waſte unprofitable ocean, but occupied by countries fit for the habitation of man. It appeared likewiſe extremely probable, that the continent, on this ſide of the globe, was balanced by a proportional quantity of land in the other hemiſphere. Theſe concluſions concerning the exiſtence of another continent, drawn from the figure and ſtructure of the globe, were confirmed by the obſervations and conjectures of modern navigators. A Portugueſe pilot, having ſtretched farther to the weſt than was uſual at that time, took up a piece of timber artificially carved, floating upon the ſea; and as it was driven towards him by a weſterly wind, he concluded that it came from ſome unknown land, ſituated in that quarter. Columbus's brother-in-law had found, to the weſt of the Maderia iſles, a piece of timber faſhioned in the ſame manner, and brought by the ſame wind; and had ſeen likewiſe canes of an enormous ſize floating upon the waves, which reſembled thoſe deſcribed by Ptolemy as productions peculiar to the Eaſt Indies *. After a courſe of weſterly winds, trees, torn up by the roots, were often driven upon the coaſts of the Azores, and at one time the dead bodies of two men, with ſingular features, which reſembled neither the inhabitants of Europe nor of Africa, were caſt aſhore there.

As the force of this united evidence, ariſing from theoretical principles and practical obſervations, led Columbus to expect the diſcovery of new countries in the Weſtern Ocean, other reaſons induced him to believe that theſe muſt be connected

* Lib. i. c. 17.

with

with the continent of India. Though the ancients had hardly ever penetrated into India farther than the banks of the Ganges, yet ſome Greek authors had ventured to deſcribe the provinces beyond that river. And, as men are prone, and at liberty, to magnify what is remote and unknown, they repreſented them as regions of an immenſe extent. Cteſias affirmed that India was as large as all the reſt of Aſia. Oneſicritus, whom Pliny the naturaliſt follows *, contended that it was equal to a third part of the habitable earth. Nearchus aſſerted, that it would take four months to march from one extremity of it to the other, in a ſtraight line †. The journal of Marco Polo, who travelled into Aſia in the thirteenth century, and who had proceeded towards the eaſt far beyond the limits to which any European had ever advanced, ſeemed to confirm theſe exaggerated accounts of the ancients. By his magnificent deſcriptions of the kingdoms of *Cathay* and *Cipango*, and of many other countries, the names of which were unknown in Europe, India appeared to be a region of vaſt extent. From theſe accounts, which, however defective, were the moſt accurate that the people of Europe had at that period received, with reſpect to the remote parts of the eaſt, Columbus drew a juſt concluſion. He contended, that in proportion as the continent of India ſtretched out towards the eaſt, it muſt, in conſequence of the ſpherical figure of the earth, approach nearer to the iſlands which had lately been diſcovered to the weſt of Africa; that the diſtance from the one to the other was probably not very conſiderable; and that the moſt direct, as well as ſhorteſt courſe, to the remote regions of the eaſt, was to be found by ſailing due weſt ‡. This notion concerning the vici-

* Nat. Hiſt. lib. vi. c. 17. † Strab. Geogr. lib. xv. p. 1011. ‡ See NOTE XII.

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nity of India to the weſtern parts of our continent, was countenanced by ſome eminent writers among the ancients, the ſanction of whoſe authority was neceſſary, in that age, to procure a favourable reception to any tenet. Ariſtotle thought it probable that the Columns of Hercules, or Straits of Gibraltar, were not far removed from the Eaſt Indies, and that there might be a communication by ſea between them *. Seneca, in terms ſtill more explicit, affirms, that, with a fair wind, one might ſail from Spain to India in a few days †. The famous Atlantic iſland deſcribed by Plato, which many ſuppoſed to be a real country, beyond which a vaſt unknown continent was ſituated, is repreſented by him as lying at no great diſtance from Spain. After weighing all theſe particulars, Columbus, in whoſe character the modeſty and diffidence of true genius was united with the ardent enthuſiaſm of a projector, did not reſt with ſuch abſolute aſſurance either upon his own arguments, or upon the authority of the ancients, as not to conſult ſuch of his contemporaries as were capable of comprehending the nature of the evidence which he produced in ſupport of his opinion. As early as the year one thouſand four hundred and ſeventy-four, he communicated his ideas concerning the probability of diſcovering new countries, by ſailing weſtwards, to Paul, a phyſician of Florence, eminent for his knowledge of coſmography, and who, on account both of the learning and candour which, he diſcovers in his reply, appears to have been well intitled to the confidence which Columbus placed in him. He warmly approved of his plan, ſuggeſted ſeveral facts in confirmation of it, and encouraged him to perſevere in an undertaking ſo laudable, and which

* Ariſtot. de Cœlo, lib. ii. c. 14. edit. Du Val, Par. 1629, vol. i. p. 472.

† Senec. Quæſt. Natur. lib. i. in proem.

muſt

must redound so much to the honour of his country, and the benefit of Europe *.

His schemes for carrying it into execution.

To a mind less capable of forming and of executing great designs than that of Columbus, all these reasonings, and observations, and authorities, would have served only as the foundation of some plausible and fruitless theory, which might have furnished matter for ingenious discourse, or fanciful conjecture. But with his sanguine and enterprising temper, speculation led directly to action. Fully satisfied himself with respect to the truth of his system, he was impatient to bring it to the test of experiment, and to set out upon a voyage of discovery. The first step towards this was to secure the patronage of some of the considerable powers in Europe, capable of undertaking such an enterprise. As long absence had not extinguished the affection which he bore to his native country, he wished that it should reap the fruits of his labours and invention. With this view, he laid his scheme before the senate of Genoa, and making his country the first tender of his service, offered to sail under the banners of the republic, in quest of the new regions which he expected to discover. But Columbus had resided for so many years in foreign parts, that his countrymen were unacquainted with his abilities and character; and though a maritime people, they were so little accustomed to distant voyages, that they could form no just idea of the principles on which he founded his hopes of success. They inconsiderately rejected his proposal, as the dream of a chimerical projector, and lost for ever the opportunity of restoring their commonwealth to its ancient splendour †.

He applies to the Genoese;

* Life of Columbus, c. viii.

† Herrera Hist. de las Indias Occid. Dec. 1. lib. i. c. 7.

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to the king of Portugal;

HAVING performed what was due to his country, Columbus was ſo little diſcouraged by the repulſe which he had received, that inſtead of relinquiſhing his undertaking, he purſued it with freſh ardour. He made his next overture to John II. king of Portugal, in whoſe dominions he had been long eſtabliſhed, and whom he conſidered, on that account, as having the ſecond claim to his ſervice. Here every circumſtance ſeemed to promiſe him a more favourable reception. He applied to a monarch of an enterpriſing genius, no incompetent judge in naval affairs, and proud of patroniſing every attempt to diſcover new countries. His ſubjects were the moſt experienced navigators in Europe, and the leaſt apt to be intimidated either by the novelty or boldneſs of any maritime expedition. In Portugal, Columbus's ſkill in his profeſſion, as well as his perſonal good qualities, were thoroughly known; and as the former rendered it probable that his ſcheme was not altogether chimerical, the latter exempted him from the ſuſpicion of any ſiniſter intention in propoſing it. Accordingly, the king liſtened to him in the moſt gracious manner, and referred the conſideration of his plan to Diego Ortiz, biſhop of Ceuta, and two Jewiſh phyſicians, eminent coſmographers, whom he was accuſtomed to conſult in matters of this kind. As in Genoa, ignorance had oppoſed and diſappointed Columbus; in Liſbon, he had to combat with prejudice, an enemy no leſs formidable. The perſons, according to whoſe deciſion his ſcheme was to be adopted or rejected, had been the chief directors of the Portugueſe navigations, and had adviſed to ſearch for a paſſage to India, by ſteering a courſe directly oppoſite to that which Columbus recommended as ſhorter and more certain. They could not, therefore, approve of his propoſal, without ſubmitting to the double mortification, of condemning their own theory, and of acknowledging

knowledging his ſuperior ſagacity. After teaſing him with captious queſtions, and ſtarting innumerable objections, with a view of betraying him into ſuch a particular explanation of his ſyſtem, as might draw from him a full diſcovery of its nature, they deferred paſſing a final judgment with reſpect to it. In the mean time, they conſpired to rob him of the honour and advantages which he expected from the ſucceſs of his ſcheme, adviſing the king to diſpatch a veſſel, ſecretly, in order to attempt the propoſed diſcovery, by following exactly the courſe which Columbus ſeemed to point out. John, forgetting on this occaſion the ſentiments becoming a monarch, meanly adopted this perfidious counſel. But the pilot, choſen to execute Columbus's plan, had neither the genius, nor the fortitude of its author. Contrary winds aroſe, no ſight of approaching land appeared, his courage failed, and he returned to Liſbon, execrating the project as equally extravagant and dangerous *.

by whom he is deceived.

He leaves Portugal and repairs to the court of Spain.

Upon diſcovering this diſhonourable tranſaction, Columbus felt the indignation, natural to an ingenuous mind, and in the warmth of his reſentment determined to break off all intercourſe with a nation capable of ſuch flagrant treachery. He inſtantly quitted the kingdom, and landed in Spain towards the cloſe of the year one thouſand four hundred and eighty-four. As he was now at liberty to court the protection of any patron, whom he could engage to approve of his plan, and to carry it into execution, he reſolved to propoſe it in perſon, to Ferdinand and Iſabella, who at that time governed the united kingdoms of Caſtile and Aragon. But, as he had already experienced the uncertain

Sends his brother into England.

* Life of Columbus, c. xi. Herrera, decad 1. lib. i. c. 7.

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certain iſſue of applications to kings and miniſters, he took the precaution of ſending into England his brother Bartholomew, to whom he had fully communicated his ideas, in order that he might negociate, at the ſame time, with Henry VII. who was reputed one of the moſt ſagacious as well as opulent princes in Europe.

Obſtacles to his ſucceſs in Spain.

It was not without reaſon that Columbus entertained doubts and fears with reſpect to the reception of his propoſals in the Spaniſh court. Spain was, at that juncture, engaged in a dangerous war with Granada, the laſt of the Mooriſh kingdoms. The wary and ſuſpicious temper of Ferdinand was not formed to reliſh bold and uncommon deſigns. Iſabella, though more generous and enterpriſing, was under the influence of her huſband in all her actions. The Spaniards had hitherto made no efforts to extend navigation beyond its ancient limits, and had beheld the amazing progreſs of diſcovery among their neighbours the Portugueſe, without one attempt to imitate or to rival them. The war with the infidels afforded an ample field to the national activity and love of glory. Under circumſtances ſo unfavourable, it was impoſſible for Columbus to make rapid progreſs with a nation, naturally ſlow and dilatory in forming all its reſolutions. His character, however, was admirably adapted to that of the people, whoſe confidence and protection he ſolicited. He was grave, though courteous in his deportment; circumſpect in his words and actions; irreproachable in his morals; and exemplary in his attention to all the duties and functions of religion. By qualities ſo reſpectable, he not only gained many private friends, but acquired ſuch general eſteem, that, notwithſtanding the plainneſs of his appearance, ſuitable to the mediocrity of his fortune, he was not conſidered as a mere adventurer, to whom indigence had ſuggeſted a viſionary

a visionary project, but was received as a person to whose propositions serious attention was due.

His scheme examined by unskilful judges,

FERDINAND and Isabella, though fully occupied by their operations against the Moors, paid so much regard to Columbus, as to remit the consideration of his plan to the queen's confessor, Ferdinand de Talavera. He consulted such of his countrymen, as were supposed best qualified to decide with respect to a subject of this kind. But true science had, hitherto, made so little progress in Spain, that those pretended philosophers, selected to judge in a matter of such moment, did not comprehend the first principles, upon which Columbus founded his conjectures and hopes. Some of them, from mistaken notions concerning the dimensions of the globe, contended that a voyage to those remote parts of the east, which Columbus expected to discover, could not be performed in less than three years. Others concluded, that either he would find the ocean to be of infinite extent, according to the opinion of some ancient philosophers; or, if he should persist in steering towards the west beyond a certain point, that the convex figure of the globe would prevent his return, and that he must inevitably perish in the vain attempt, to open a communication between the two opposite hemispheres, which nature had for ever disjoined. Even without deigning to enter into any particular discussion some rejected the scheme in general, upon the credit of a maxim, under which the ignorant and unenterprising shelter themselves in every age, "That it is presumptuous in any person, to suppose that he alone possesses knowledge superior to all the rest of mankind united." They maintained, that if there were really any such countries as Columbus pretended, they could not have remained so long concealed,

nor

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nor would the wiſdom and ſagacity of former ages have left the glory of this invention to an obſcure Genoeſe pilot.

who make an unfavourable report concerning it.

It required all Columbus's patience and addreſs to negociate with men capable of advancing ſuch ſtrange propoſitions. He had to contend not only with the obſtinacy of ignorance, but with what is ſtill more intractable, the pride of falſe knowledge. After innumerable conferences, and waſting five years in fruitleſs endeavours to inform and to ſatisfy them, Talavera, at laſt, made ſuch an unfavourable report to Ferdinand and Iſabella, as induced them to acquaint Columbus, that until the war with the Moors ſhould be brought to a period, it was impoſſible for them to engage in any new and expenſive enterpriſe.

Whatever care was take to ſoften the harſhneſs of this declaration, Columbus conſidered it as a final rejection of his propoſals. But happily for mankind, that ſuperiority of genius, which is capable of forming great and uncommon deſigns, is uſually accompanied with an ardent enthuſiaſm, which can neither be cooled by delays, nor damped by diſappointment. Columbus was of this ſanguine temper. Though he felt deeply the cruel blow given to his hopes, and retired immediately from a court, where he had been amuſed ſo long with vain expectations, his confidence in the juſtneſs of his own ſyſtem did not diminiſh, and his impatience to demonſtrate the truth of it by an actual experiment became greater than ever. Having courted the protection of ſovereign ſtates without ſucceſs, he applied next, to perſons of inferior rank, and addreſſed ſucceſſively the dukes of Medina Sidonia, and Medina Celi, who, though ſubjects, were poſſeſſed of power and opulence more than

than equal to the enterprise which he projected. His negociations with them proved as fruitless, as those in which he had been hitherto engaged; for these noblemen were either as little convinced by Columbus's arguments as their superiors, or they were afraid of alarming the jealousy, and offending the pride of Ferdinand, by countenancing a scheme, which he had rejected *.

Negociation of his brother in England.

AMID the painful sensations occasioned by such a succession of disappointments, Columbus had to sustain the additional distress, of having received no accounts of his brother, whom he had sent to the court of England. In his voyage to that country, Bartholomew had been so unfortunate as to fall into the hands of pirates, who having stripped him of every thing, detained him a prisoner for several years. At length, he made his escape, and arrived in London, but in such extreme indigence, that he was obliged to employ himself during a considerable time, in drawing and selling maps, in order to pick up as much money as would purchase a decent dress, in which he might venture to appear at court. He then laid before the king the proposals, with which he had been entrusted by his brother, and, notwithstanding Henry's excessive caution and parsimony, which rendered him averse to new and expensive undertakings, he received Columbus's overtures, with more approbation, than any monarch to whom they had hitherto been presented.

Columbus has some prospects of encouragement in Spain.

MEANWHILE, Columbus being unacquainted with his brother's fate, and having now no prospect of encouragement in Spain, resolved to visit the

* Life of Colum. c. 13. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. i. c. 7..

court

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court of England in perſon, in hopes of meeting with a more favourable reception there. He had already made preparations for this purpoſe, and taken meaſures for the diſpoſal of his children during his abſence, when Juan Perez, the prior of the monaſtery of Rabida, near Palos, in which they had been educated, earneſtly ſolicited him to defer his journey for a ſhort time. Perez was a man of conſiderable learning, and of ſome credit with queen Iſabella, to whom he was known perſonally. He was warmly attached to Columbus, with whoſe abilities as well as integrity he had many opportunities of being acquainted. Prompted by curioſity or by friendſhip, he entered upon an accurate examination of his ſyſtem, in conjunction with a phyſician ſettled in the neighbourhood, who was a conſiderable proficient in mathematical knowledge. This inveſtigation ſatisfied them ſo thoroughly, with reſpect to the ſolidity of the principles on which Columbus founded his opinion, and the probability of ſucceſs in executing the plan which he propoſed, that Perez, in order to prevent his country from being deprived of the glory and benefit, which muſt accrue to the patrons of ſuch a grand enterpriſe, ventured to write to Iſabella, conjuring her to conſider the matter anew, with the attention which it merited.

Moved by the repreſentations of a perſon whom ſhe reſpected, Iſabella deſired Perez to repair immediately to the village of Santa Fé, in which, on account of the ſiege of Granada, the court reſided at that time, that ſhe might confer with him upon this important ſubject. The firſt effect of their interview was a gracious invitation of Columbus back to court, accompanied with the preſent of a ſmall ſum to equip him for the journey. As there was now a certain proſpect, that the war with the

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Moors

Moors would ſpeedily be brought to an happy iſſue by the reduction of Granada, which would leave the nation at liberty to engage in new undertakings; this, as well as the mark of royal favour, with which Columbus had been lately honoured, encouraged his friends to appear with greater confidence than formerly in ſupport of his ſcheme. The chief of theſe Alonſo de Quintanilla, comptroller of the finances in Caſtile, and Louis de Santangel, receiver of the eccleſiaſtical revenues in Aragon, whoſe meritorious zeal in promoting this great deſign, entitles their names to an honourable place in hiſtory, introduced Columbus to many perſons of high rank, and intereſted them warmly in his behalf.

Is again diſappointed.

BUT it was not an eaſy matter to inſpire Ferdinand with favourable ſentiments. His cold diſtruſtful prudence ſtill regarded Columbus's project as extravagant and chimerical, and in order to render the efforts of his partizans ineffectual, he had the addreſs to employ in this new negociation with him, ſome of the perſons who had formerly pronounced his ſcheme to be impracticable. To their aſtoniſhment, Columbus appeared before them with the ſame confident hopes of ſucceſs as formerly, and inſiſted upon the ſame high recompence. He propoſed that a ſmall fleet ſhould be fitted out, under his command, to attempt the diſcovery, and demanded to be appointed perpetual and hereditary admiral and viceroy of all the ſeas and lands which he ſhould diſcover, and to have the tenth of the profits ariſing from them, ſettled irrevocably upon himſelf and his deſcendants. At the ſame time, he offered to advance the eight part of the ſum neceſſary for accompliſhing his deſign, on condition that he ſhould be entitled to a proportional ſhare of benefit from the adventure. If the enterprize ſhould totally

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totally miſcarry, he made no ſtipulation for any reward or emolument whatever. Inſtead of viewing this conduct as the cleareſt evidence of his full perſuaſion with reſpect to the truth of his own ſyſtem, or being ſtruck with that magnanimity, which, after ſo many delays and repulſes, would ſtoop to nothing inferior to its original claims, the perſons with whom Columbus treated, began meanly to calculate the expence of the expedition, and the value of the reward which he demanded. The expence, moderate as it was, they repreſented to be too great for Spain, in the preſent exhauſted ſtate of its finances. They contended, that the honours and emoluments claimed by Columbus, were exorbitant, even if he ſhould perform the utmoſt of what he had promiſed; and if all his ſanguine hopes ſhould prove illuſive, ſuch vaſt conceſſions to an adventurer would be deemed not only inconſiderate, but ridiculous. In this impoſing garb of caution and prudence, their opinion appeared ſo plauſible, and was ſo warmly ſupported by Ferdinand, that Iſabella declined giving any countenance to Columbus, and abruptly broke off the negociation with him which ſhe had begun.

THIS was more mortifying to Columbus than all the diſappointments which he had hitherto met with. The invitation to court from Iſabella, like an unexpected ray of light, had opened ſuch proſpects of ſucceſs, as encouraged him to hope that his labours were at an end; but now darkneſs and uncertainty returned, and his mind, firm as it was, could hardly ſupport the ſhock of ſuch an unforeſeen reverſe. He withdrew in deep anguiſh from court, with an intention of proſecuting his voyage to England, as his laſt reſource.

ABOUT

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Proves at laſt ſucceſsful.

1492, January 2.

ABOUT that time Granada ſurrendered, and Ferdinand and Iſabella, in triumphal pomp, took poſſeſſion of a city, the reduction of which extirpated a foreign power from the heart of their dominions, and rendered them maſters of all the provinces, extending from the bottom of the Pyrenees to the frontiers of Portugal. As the flow of ſpirits which accompanies ſucceſs elevates the mind, and renders it enterpriſing, Quintanilla and Santangel, the vigilant and diſcerning patrons of Columbus, took advantage of this favourable ſituation, in order to make one effort more in behalf of their friend. They addreſſed themſelves to Iſabella, and, after expreſſing ſome ſurpriſe, that ſhe, who had always been the munificent patroneſs of generous undertakings, ſhould heſitate ſo long to countenance the moſt ſplendid ſcheme that had ever been propoſed to any monarch, they repreſented to her, that Columbus was a man of a ſound underſtanding and virtuous character, well qualified, by his experience in navigation, as well as his knowledge of geometry, to form juſt ideas with reſpect to the ſtructure of the globe and the ſituation of its various regions; that, by offering to riſk his own life and fortune in the execution of his ſcheme, he gave the moſt ſatisfying evidence both of his integrity and hope of ſucceſs; that the ſum requiſite for equipping ſuch an armament as he demanded was inconſiderable, and the advantages which might accrue from his undertaking were immenſe, that he demanded no recompence for his invention and labour, but what was to ariſe from the countries which he ſhould diſcover; that, as it was worthy of her magnanimity to make this noble attempt to extend the ſphere of human knowledge, and to open an intercourſe with regions hitherto unknown, ſo it would afford the higheſt ſatisfaction to her piety and zeal, after re-eſtabliſhing the Chriſtian faith in thoſe provinces of Spain from which

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which it had been long baniſhed, to diſcover a new world, to which ſhe might communicate the light and bleſſings of divine truth; that if now ſhe did not decide inſtantly, the opportunity would be loſt irretrievably; that Columbus was on his way to foreign countries, where ſome prince, more fortunate or adventurous, would cloſe with his propoſals, and Spain would for ever bewail the fatal timidity which had excluded her from the glory and advantages that ſhe had once in her power to have enjoyed.

THESE forcible arguments, urged by perſons of ſuch authority, and at a juncture ſo well choſen, produced the deſired effect. They diſpelled all Iſabella's doubts and fears; ſhe ordered Columbus to be inſtantly recalled, declared her reſolution of employing him on his own terms, and regretting the low ſtate of her finances, generouſly offered to pledge her own jewels, in order to raiſe as much money as would be needed in making preparations for the voyage. Santangel, in a tranſport of gratitude, kiſſed the queen's hand, and in order to ſave her from having recourſe to ſuch a mortifying expedient for procuring money, engaged to advance immediately the ſum that was requiſite *.

The conditions of his agreement with Spain.

COLUMBUS had proceeded ſome leagues on his journey, when the meſſenger from Iſabella overtook him. Upon receiving an account of the unexpected revolution in his favour, he returned directly to Santa Fé, though ſome remainder of diffidence ſtill mingled itſelf with his joy. But the cordial reception which he met with from Iſabella, together with the near proſpect of ſetting out upon that voyage which had ſo long been the object of his thoughts and wiſhes, ſoon effaced the

* Herrera, dec. 1. lib. i. c. 8.

remembrance

remembrance of all that he had ſuffered in Spain, during eight tedious years of ſolicitation and ſuſpenſe. The negociation now went forward with facility and diſpatch, and a treaty or capitulation with Columbus was ſigned on the ſeventeenth of April, one thouſand four hundred and ninety-two. The chief articles of it were, 1. Ferdinand and Iſabella, as ſovereigns of the ocean, conſtituted Columbus their high admiral in all the ſeas, iſlands, and continents which ſhould be diſcovered by his induſtry; and ſtipulated, that he and his heirs for ever ſhould enjoy this office, with the ſame powers and prerogatives which belonged to the high admiral of Caſtile, within the limits of his juriſdiction. 2. They appointed Columbus their viceroy in all the iſlands and continents which he ſhould diſcover; but if, for the better adminiſtration of affairs, it ſhould hereafter be neceſſary to eſtabliſh a ſeparate governor in any of thoſe countries, they authoriſed Columbus to name three perſons, of whom they would chuſe one for that office; and the dignity of viceroy, with all its immunities, was likewiſe to be hereditary in the family of Columbus. 3. They granted to Columbus and his heirs for ever the tenth of the free profits accruing from the productions and commerce of the countries which he ſhould diſcover. 4. They declared, that if any controverſy or law-ſuit ſhall ariſe with reſpect to any mercantile tranſaction in the countries which ſhould be diſcovered, it ſhould be determined by the ſole authority of Columbus, or of judges to be appointed by him. 5. They permitted Columbus to advance one-eighth part of what ſhould be expended in preparing for the expedition, and in carrying on commerce with the countries which he ſhould diſcover, and intitled him, in return to an eighth part of the profit *

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* Life of Columbus, c. 15. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. i. c. 9.

THOUGH

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THOUGH the name of Ferdinand appears conjoined with that of Iſabella in this tranſaction, his diſtruſt of Columbus was ſtill ſo violent, that he refuſed to take any part in the enterpriſe, as king of Aragon. As the whole expence of the expedition was to be defrayed by the crown of Caſtile, Iſabella reſerved for her ſubjects of that kingdom an excluſive right to all the benefits which might redound from its ſucceſs.

The preparations for his voyage.

AS ſoon as the treaty was ſigned, Iſabella, by her attention and activity in forwarding the preparations for the voyage, endeavoured to make ſome reparation to Columbus for the time which he had loſt in fruitleſs ſolicitation. By the twelfth of May, all that depended upon her was adjuſted; and Columbus waited on the king and queen, in order to receive their final inſtructions. Every thing reſpecting the deſtination and conduct of the voyage, they committed implicitly to the diſpoſal of his prudence. But, that they might avoid giving any juſt cauſe of offence to the king of Portugal, they ſtrictly enjoined him not to approach near to the Portugueſe ſettlements on the coaſt of Guinea, nor in any of the other countries to which they claimed right as diſcoverers. Iſabella had ordered the ſhips, of which Columbus was to take the command, to be fitted out in the port of Palos, a ſmall maritime town in the province of Andaluſia. As the prior Juan Perez, to whom Columbus had already been ſo much indebted, reſided in the neighbourhood of this place, he, by the influence of that good eccleſiaſtic, as well as by his own connection with the inhabitants, not only raiſed among them what he wanted of the ſum that he was bound by treaty to advance, but engaged ſeveral of them to accompany him in the voyage. The chief of theſe aſſociates were three brothers of the name of Pinzon,

of

of considerable wealth, and of great experience in naval affairs, who were willing to hazard their lives and fortunes in the enterprise. BOOK II. 1492.

But, after all the endeavours and efforts of Isabella and Columbus, the armament was not suitable either to the dignity of the nation by which it was equipped, or to the importance of the service for which it was destined. It consisted of three vessels only. The largest, a ship of no considerable burden, was commanded by Columbus, as admiral, who gave it the name of *Santa Maria*, out of respect for the Blessed Virgin, whom he honoured with singular devotion. Of the second, called the *Pinta*, Martin Pinzon was captain, and his brother Francis pilot. The third, named the *Nigna*, was under the command of Vincent Yanez Pinzon. These two were light vessels, hardly superior in burden or force to large boats. This squadron, if it merits that name, was victualed for twelve months, and had on board ninety men, mostly sailors, together with a few adventurers, who followed the fortune of Columbus, and some gentlemen of Isabella's court, whom she appointed to accompany him. Though the expence of the undertaking was one of the circumstances that chiefly alarmed the court of Spain, and retarded so long the negotiation with Columbus, the sum employed in fitting out this squadron did not exceed four thousand pounds.

As the art of shipbuilding in the fifteenth century was extremely rude, and the bulk and construction of vessels were accommodated to the short and easy voyages along the coast which they were accustomed to perform, it is a proof of the courage as well as enterprising genius of Columbus, that

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he ventured, with a fleet ſo unfit for a diſtant navigation, to explore unknown ſeas, where he had no chart to guide him, to know of the tides and currents, and no experience of the dangers to which he might be expoſed. His eagerneſs to accompliſh the great deſign which had ſo long engroſſed his thoughts, made him overlook or diſregard every circumſtance that would have intimidated a mind leſs adventurous. He puſhed forward the preparations with ſuch ardour, and was ſeconded ſo effectually by the perſons to whom Iſabella committed the ſuperintendence of this buſineſs, that every thing was ſoon in readineſs for the voyage. But as Columbus was deeply impreſſed with ſentiments of religion, he would not ſet out upon an expedition ſo arduous, and of which one great object was to extend the knowledge of the Chriſtian faith, without imploring publicly the guidance and protection of Heaven. With this view, he, together with all the perſons under his command, marched in ſolemn proceſſion to the monaſtery of Rabida. After confeſſing their ſins, and obtaining abſolution from them, they received the holy ſacrament from the hands of the prior, who joined in his prayers to theirs for the ſucceſs of an enterpriſe which he had ſo zealouſly patronized.

His departure from Spain.

NEXT morning, being Friday the third day of Auguſt, in the year one thouſand four hundred and ninety-two, Columbus ſet ſail, a little before ſunriſe, in preſence of a vaſt crowd of ſpectators, who ſent up their ſupplications to Heaven for the proſperous iſſue of the voyage, which they wiſhed, rather than expected. Columbus ſteered directly for the Canary Iſlands, and arrived there without any occurrence that would have deſerved notice on any other occaſion. But in a voyage of ſuch expectation and importance, every circumſtance was the

August 13.

object

object of attention. The rudder of the Pinta broke looſe, the day after they left the harbour, and that accident alarmed the crew, no leſs ſuperſtitious than unſkilful, as a certain omen of the unfortunate deſtiny of the expedition. Even in the ſhort run to the canaries, the ſhips were found to be ſo crazy and ill appointed, as to be very improper for a navigation which was expected to be both long and dangerous. Columbus refitted them, however, to the beſt of his power, and having ſupplied himſelf with freſh proviſions, he took his departure from Gomera, one of the moſt weſterly of the Canary Iſlands, on the ſixth day of September. 1492.

The courſe which he held.

HERE the voyage of diſcovery may properly be ſaid to begin; for Columbus holding his courſe due weſt, left immediately the uſual tract of navigation, and ſtretched into unfrequented and unknown ſeas. The firſt day, as it was very calm, he made but little way; but on the ſecond, he loſt ſight of the Canaries; and many of the ſailors, dejected already and diſmayed, when they contemplated the boldneſs of the undertaking, began to beat their breaſts, and to ſhed tears, as if they were never more to behold land. Columbus comforted them with aſſurances of ſucceſs, and the proſpect of vaſt wealth, in thoſe opulent regions whither he was conducting them. This early diſcovery of the ſpirit of his followers taught Columbus, that he muſt prepare to ſtruggle, not only with the unavoidable difficulties which might be expected from the nature of his undertaking, but with ſuch as were likely to ariſe from the ignorance and timidity of the people under his command; and he perceived that the art of governing the minds of men would be no leſs requiſite for accompliſhing the diſcoveries which he had in view, than naval ſkill and an enterpriſing

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courage. Happily for himſelf, and for the country by which he was employed, he joined to the ardent temper and inventive genius of a projector, virtues of another ſpecies, which are rarely united with them. He poſſeſſed a thorough knowlege of mankind, an inſinuating addreſs, a patient perſeverance in executing any plan, the perfect government of his own paſſions, and the talent of acquiring the direction of thoſe of other men. All theſe qualities, which formed him for command, were accompanied with that ſuperior knowledge of his profeſſion, which begets confidence in times of difficulty and danger. To unſkilful Spaniſh ſailors, accuſtomed only to coaſting voyages in the Mediterranean, the maritime ſcience of Columbus, the fruit of thirty years experience, improved by an acquaintance with all the inventions of the Portugueſe, appeared immenſe. As ſoon as they put to ſea, he regulated every thing by his ſole authority; he ſuperintended the execution of every order; and allowing himſelf only a few hours for ſleep, he was at all other times upon deck. As his courſe lay through ſeas which had not formerly been viſited, the ſounding-line, or inſtruments for obſervation, were continually in his hands. After the example of the Portugueſe diſcoverers, he attended to the motion of tides and currents, watched the flight of birds, and appearance of fiſhes, of ſea-weeds, and of every thing that floated on the waves, and entered every occurrence, with a minute exactneſs, in the journal which he kept. As the length of the voyage could not fail of alarming ſailors habituated only to ſhort excurſions, Columbus endeavoured to conceal from them the real progreſs which they made. With this view, though they run eighteen leagues on the ſecond day after they left Gomera, he gave out that they had advanced only fifteen, and he uniformly employed the ſame artifice of reckoning

Vigilance and attention of Columbus.

ſhort

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ſhort during the whole voyage. By the fourteenth of September, the fleet was above two hundred leagues to the weſt of the Canary Iſles, at a greater diſtance from the land than any Spaniard had been before that time. There they were ſtruck with an appearance no leſs aſtoniſhing than it was new. They obſerved, that the magnetic needle, in their compaſſes, did not point exactly to the polar ſtar, but varied a degree towards the weſt; and as they proceeded, this variation increaſed. This appearance, which is now familiar, though it ſtill remains one of the myſteries of nature, into the cauſe of which the ſagacity of man hath not been able to penetrate, filled the companions of Columbus with terror. They were now in a boundleſs unknown ocean, far from the uſual courſe of navigation; nature itſelf ſeemed to be altered, and the only guide which they had left was about to fail them. Columbus, with no leſs quickneſs than ingenuity, invented a reaſon for this appearance, which, though it did not ſatisfy himſelf, ſeemed ſo plauſible to them, as diſpelled their fears, or ſilenced their murmurs.

Apprehenſions and alarms of his crew.

He ſtill continued to ſteer due weſt, nearly in the ſame latitude with the Canary iſlands. In this courſe he came within the ſphere of the trade wind, which blows invaribly from eaſt to weſt, between the tropics and a few degrees beyond them. He advanced before this ſteady gale with ſuch uniform rapidity, that it was ſeldom neceſſary to ſhift a ſail. When about four hundred leagues to the weſt of the Canaries, he found the ſea ſo covered with weeds, that it had a reſemblance to a meadow of vaſt extent; and in ſome places they were ſo thick, as to retard the motion of the veſſels. This ſtrange appearance occaſioned new alarm and diſquiet. The ſailors imagined that they were now arrived at the utmoſt boundary

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boundary of the navigable ocean; that these floating weeds would obstruct their farther progress, and concealed dangerous rocks, or some large tract of land, which had sunk, they knew not how, in that place. Columbus endeavoured to persuade them, that the appearance which had alarmed, ought rather to have encouraged them, and was to be considered as the sign of approaching land. At the same time, a brisk gale arose, and carried them forward. Several birds were seen hovering about the ship *, and directing their flight towards the west. The desponding crew resumed some degree of spirit, and began to entertain fresh hopes

These increase.

UPON the first of October they were, according to the admiral's reckoning, seven hundred and seventy leagues to the westward of the Canaries, but lest his men should be intimidated by the prodigious length of the navigation, he gave out that they had proceeded only five hundred and eighty-four leagues; and, fortunately for Columbus, neither his own pilot, nor those of the other ships, had skill sufficient to correct this error, and discover the deceit. They had now been above three weeks at sea; they had proceeded far beyond what former navigators had attempted or deemed possible; all their prognostics of discovery, drawn from the flight of birds and other circumstances, had proved fallacious; the appearances of land, with which their own credulity or the artifice of their commander had from time to time flattered and amused them, had been altogether illusive, and their prospect of success seemed now to be as distant as ever. These reflections occurred often to men, who had no other object or occupation, than to reason and discourse concerning the intention and circumstances of their expedition. They made

* See NOTE XIII.

impression,

impreſſion, at firſt, upon the ignorant and timid, and extending, by degrees, to ſuch as were better informed or more reſolute, the contagion ſpread at length from ſhip to ſhip. From ſecret whiſpers and murmurings, they proceeded to open cabals and public complaints. They taxed their ſovereign with inconſiderate credulity, in paying ſuch regard to the vain promiſes and raſh conjectures of an indigent foreigner, as to hazard the lives of ſo many of her own ſubjects, in proſecuting a chimerical ſcheme. They affirmed that they had fully performed their duty, by venturing ſo far in an unknown and hopeleſs courſe, and could incur no blame for refuſing, at laſt, to follow a deſperate adventurer to certain deſtruction. They contended, that it was neceſſary to think of returning to Spain, while their crazy veſſels were ſtill in a condition to keep the ſea, but expreſſed their fears that the attempt would prove vain, as the wind, which had hitherto been ſo favourable to their courſe, muſt render it impoſſible to ſail in the oppoſite direction. All agreed that Columbus ſhould be compelled by force to adopt a meaſure on which their common ſafety depended. Some of the more audacious propoſed, as the moſt expeditious and certain method for getting rid at once of his remonſtrances, to throw him into the ſea, being perſuaded that, upon their return to Spain, the death of an unſucceſsful projector would excite little concern, and be inquired into with no curioſity.

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The addreſs of Columbus in ſoothing them.

Columbus was fully ſenſible of his perilous ſituation. He had obſerved, with great concern, the fatal operation of ignorance and of fear in producing diſaffection among his crew, and ſaw that it was now ready to burſt out into open mutiny. He retained, however, perfect preſence of mind. He affected to ſeem ignorant of their machinations. Notwithſtanding

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Notwithſtanding the agitation and ſolicitude of his own mind, he appeared with a cheerful countenance, like a man ſatisfied with the progreſs which he had made, and confident of ſucceſs. Sometimes he employed all the arts of inſinuation to ſooth his men. Sometimes he endeavoured to work upon their ambition or avarice, by magnificent deſcriptions of the fame and wealth which they were about to acquire. On other occaſions, he aſſumed a tone of authority, and threatened them with vengeance from their ſovereign, if, by their daſtardly behaviour, they ſhould defeat this noble effort to promote the glory of God, and to exalt the Spaniſh name above that of every other nation. Even with ſeditious ſailors, the words of a man whom they had been accuſtomed to reverence, were weighty and perſuaſive. They not only reſtrained them from thoſe violent exceſſes, which they meditated, but prevailed with them to accompany their admiral for ſome time longer.

Their fears return.

As they proceeded, the indications of approaching the land to be ſeemed more certain, and excited hope in proportion. The birds began to appear in flocks, making towards the ſouth-weſt. Columbus, in imitation of the Portugueſe navigators, who had been guided, in ſeveral of their diſcoveries, by the motion of birds, altered his courſe from due weſt towards that quarter whither they pointed their flight. But, after holding on for ſeveral days in this new direction, without any better ſucceſs than formerly, having ſeen no object, during thirty days, but the ſea and the ſky, their hopes ſubſided faſter than they had riſen; their fears revived with additional force; impatience, rage, and deſpair, appeared in every countenance. All ſenſe of ſubordination was loſt: the officers, who had hitherto concurred with Columbus in opinion, and ſupported

Danger of a mutiny.

ported his authority, now took part with the men; they assembled tumultuously on the deck, expostulated with their commander, mingled threats with their expostulations, and required him instantly to tack about and return to Europe. Columbus perceived that it would be of no avail to have recourse to any of his former arts, which having been tried so often, had lost their effects; and that it was impossible to rekindle any zeal for the success of the enterprise among men, in whose breasts fear had extinguished every generous sentiment. He saw that it was no less vain to think of employing either gentle or severe measures, to quell a mutiny so general and so violent. It was necessary, on all these accounts, to soothe passions which he could no longer command, and to give way to a torrent too impetuous to be checked. He promised solemnly to his men that he would comply with their request, provided they would accompany him, and obey his commands for three days longer, and if, during that time, land were not discovered, he would then abandon the enterprise, and direct his course towards Spain *.

Distress of Columbus.

ENRAGED as the sailors were, and impatient to turn their faces again towards their native country, his proposition did not appear to them unreasonable. Nor did Columbus hazard much in confining himself to a term so short. The presages of discovering land were now so numerous and promising, that he deemed them infallible. For some days the sounding line reached the bottom, and the soil which it brought up indicated land to be at no great distance. The flocks of birds increased, and were composed not only of sea fowl, but of such land

Encouraging appearances of success.

* Oviedo, Hist. ap. Ramus. vol. iii. p. 81. E.

birds

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birds as could not be ſuppoſed to fly far from the ſhore. The crew of the Pinta obſerved a cane floating, which ſeemed to have been newly cut, and likewiſe a piece of timber artificially carved. The ſailors aboard the Nigna took up the branch of a tree with red berries, perfectly freſh. The clouds around the ſetting ſun aſſumed a new appearance; the air was more mild and warm, and, during night, the wind became unequal and variable. From all theſe ſymptoms, Columbus was ſo confident of being near land, that on the evening of the eleventh of October, after public prayers for ſucceſs, he ordered the ſails to be furled, and the ſhips to lie by, keeping ſtrict watch, leſt they ſhould be driven aſhore in the night. During this interval of ſuſpence and expectation, no man ſhut his eyes, all kept upon deck, gazing intently towards that quarter where they expected to diſcover the land, which had been ſo long the object of their wiſhes.

Land diſcovered.

About two hours before midnight, Columbus, ſtanding on the forecaſtle, obſerved a light at a diſtance, and privately pointed it out to Pedro Guttierez, a page of the queen's wardrobe. Guttierez perceived it, and calling to Salcedo, comptroller of the fleet, all three ſaw it in motion, as if it were carried from place to place. A little after midnight, the joyful ſound of *land*, *land*, was heard from the Pinta, which kept always a-head of the other ſhips. But, having been ſo often deceived by fallacious appearances, they were now become ſlow of belief, and waited, in all the anguiſh of uncertainty and impatience, for the return of

Friday, Oct. 12.

day. As ſoon as morning dawned, their doubts and fears were diſpelled, they beheld an iſland about two leagues to the north, whoſe flat and verdant fields, well ſtored with wood, and watered with many rivulets, preſented to them the aſpect

of

of a delightful country. The crew of the Pinta inſtantly began the *Te Deum*, as a hymn of thankſgiving to God, and were joined by thoſe of the other ſhips, with tears of joy and tranſports of congratulation. This office of gratitude to Heaven was followed by an act of juſtice to their commander. They threw themſelves at the feet of Columbus, with feelings of ſelf condemnation mingled with reverence. They implored him to pardon their ignorance, incredulity, and inſolence, which had created him ſo much unneceſſary diſquiet, and had ſo often obſtructed the proſecution of his well-concerted plan; and paſſing, in the warmth of their admiration, from one extreme to another, they now pronounced the man, whom they had ſo lately reviled and threatened, to be a perſon inſpired by Heaven with ſagacity and fortitude more than human, in order to accompliſh a deſign, ſo far beyond the ideas and conception of all former ages.

First interview with the natives.

As ſoon as the ſun aroſe, all the boats were manned and armed. They rowed towards the iſland with their colours diſplayed, warlike muſic, and other martial pomp; and as they approached the coaſt, they ſaw it covered with a multitude of people, whom the novelty of the ſpectacle had drawn together, and whoſe attitudes and geſtures expreſſed wonder and aſtoniſhment at the ſtrange objects which preſented themſelves to their view. Columbus was the firſt European who ſet foot in the New World which he had diſcovered. He landed in a rich dreſs, and with a naked ſword in his hand. His men followed, and kneeling down, they all kiſſed the ground which they had ſo long deſired to ſee. They next erected a crucifix, and proſtrating themſelves before it, returned thanks to God for conducting their voyage to ſuch an happy iſſue.

They

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They then took ſolemn poſſeſſion of the country for the crown of Caſtile and Leon, with all the formalities which the Portugueſe were accuſtomed to obſerve in acts of this kind, in their new diſcoveries *.

Their mutual aſtoniſhment.

THE Spaniards, while thus employed were ſurrounded by many of the natives, who gazed, in ſilent admiration, upon actions which they could not comprehend, and of which they did not foreſee the conſequences. The dreſs of the Spaniards, the whiteneſs of their ſkins, their beards, their arms, appeared ſtrange and ſurpriſing. The vaſt machines in which they had traverſed the occean, that ſeemed to move upon the waters with wings, and uttered a dreadful ſound reſembling thunder, accompanied with lightning and ſmoke, ſtruck them with ſuch terror, that they began to reſpect their new gueſts as a ſuperior order of beings, and concluded that they were children of the Sun, who had deſcended to viſit the earth.

THE Europeans were hardly leſs amazed at the ſcene now before them. Every herb, and ſhrub, and tree, was different from thoſe which flouriſhed in Europe. The ſoil ſeemed to be rich, but bore few marks of cultivation. The climate, even to Spaniards, felt warm, though extremely delightful. The inhabitants appeared in the ſimple innocence of nature, entirely naked. Their black hair, long and uncurled, floated upon their ſhoulders, or was bound in treſſes around their heads. They had no beards, and every part of their bodies was perfectly ſmooth. Their complexion was of a duſky copper colour, their features ſingular, rather than diſagreeable, their aſpect gentle and timid. Though not tall, they were well ſhaped, and active. Their

* Life of Columbus, c. 22, 23. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. i. c. 13.

faces,

faces, and other parts of their body, were fantastically painted with glaring colours. They were shy at first through fear, but soon became familiar with the Spaniards, and with transports of joy received from them hawks-bells, glass beads, and other baubles, in return for which they gave such provisions as they had, and some cotton yarn, the only commodity of value that they could produce. Towards evening, Columbus returned to his ships, accompanied by many of the islanders in their boats, which they called *canoes*, and though rudely formed out of the trunk of a single tree, they rowed them with surprising dexterity. Thus, in the first interview between the inhabitants of the old and new worlds, every thing was conducted amicably, and to their mutual satisfaction. The former, enlightened and ambitious, formed already vast ideas with respect to the advantages which they might derive from those regions that began to open to their view. The latter, simple and undiscerning, had no foresight of the calamities and desolation which were now approaching their country.

Columbus assumes the title of admiral and viceroy.

COLUMBUS, who now assumed the title and authority of admiral and viceroy, called the island which he had discovered *San Salvador*. It is better known by the name of *Guanahani*, which the natives gave to it, and is one of that large cluster of islands called the Lucaya or Bahama isles. It is situated above three thousand miles to the west of Gomera, from which the squadron took its departure, and only four degrees to the south of it; so little had Columbus deviated from the westerly course, which he had chosen as the most proper.

Proceeds towards the south.

COLUMBUS employed the next day in visiting the coasts of the island; and from the universal poverty of the inhabitants he perceived that this was not

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not the rich country for which he ſought. But, conformably to his theory concerning the diſcovery of thoſe regions of Aſia which ſtretched towards the eaſt, he concluded that San Salvador was one of the iſles which geographers deſcribed as ſituated in the vaſt ocean adjacent to India*. Having obſerved that moſt of the people whom he had ſeen wore ſmall plates of gold, by way of ornament, in their noſtrils, he eagerly inquired where they got that precious metal. They pointed towards the ſouth, and made him comprehend by ſigns, that gold abounded in countries ſituated in that quarter. Thither he immediately determined to direct his courſe, in full confidence of finding there thoſe opulent regions which had been the object of his voyage, and would be a recompence for all his toils and dangers. He took along with him ſeven of the natives of San Salvador, that, by acquiring the Spaniſh language, they might ſerve as guides and interpreters; and thoſe innocent people conſidered it as a mark of diſtinction when they were ſelected to accompany him.

Diſcovers Cuba.

He ſaw ſeveral iſlands, and touched at three of the largeſt, on which he beſtowed the names of St. Mary of the Conception, Fernandina, and Iſabella. But as their ſoil, productions, and inhabitants, nearly reſembled thoſe of San Salvador, he made no ſtay in any of them. He inquired every where for gold, and received uniformly for anſwer, that it was brought from the ſouth. He followed that courſe, and ſoon diſcovered a country of vaſt extent, not perfectly level, like thoſe which he had already viſited, but ſo diverſified with riſing grounds, hills, rivers, woods, and plains, that he was uncertain whether it might prove an iſland, or part of the continent. The natives of San Salva-

* Pet. Mart. epiſt. 135.

dor,

dor, whom he had on board, called it *Cuba*; Columbus gave it the name of Juanna. He entered the mouth of a large river with his ſquadron, and all the inhabitants fled to the mountains as he approached the ſhore. But as he reſolved to careen his ſhips in that place, he ſent ſome Spaniards, together with one of the people of San Salvador, to view the interior parts of the country. They, having advanced above ſixty miles from the ſhore, reported, upon their return, that the ſoil was richer and more cultivated than any they had hitherto diſcovered; that, beſides many ſcattered cottages, they had found one village, containing above a thouſand inhabitants; that the people, though naked, ſeemed to be more intelligent than thoſe of San Salvador, but had treated them with the ſame reſpectful attention, kiſſing their feet, and honouring them as ſacred beings allied to Heaven; that they had given them to eat a certain root, the taſte of which reſembled roaſted cheſnuts, and likewiſe a ſingular ſpecies of corn called *maize*, which, either when roaſted whole or ground into meal, was abundantly palatable; that there ſeemed to be no four-footed animals in the country, but a ſpecies of dogs, which could not bark, and a creature reſembling a rabbit, but of a much ſmaller ſize; that they had obſerved ſome ornaments of gold among the people, but of no great value *.

His conjectures with regard to it.

THESE meſſengers had prevailed with ſome of the natives to accompany them, who informed Columbus, that the gold of which they made their ornaments was found in *Cubanacan*. By this word they meant the middle or inland part of Cuba; but Columbus, being ignorant of their language, as well as unaccuſtomed to their pronunciation, and his thoughts running continually upon his own the-

* Life of Columbus, c. 24—28. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. i. c. 14.

ory

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ory concerning the diſcovery of the Eaſt Indies, he was led, by the reſemblance of ſound, to ſuppoſe that they ſpoke of the Great Khan, and imagined that the opulent kingdom of *Cathay*, deſcribed by Marco Polo, was not very remote. This induced him to employ ſome time in viewing the country. He viſited almoſt every harbour, from Porto del Principe, on the north coaſt of Cuba, to the eaſtern extremity of the iſland; but though delighted with the beauty of the ſcenes, which every where preſented themſelves, and amazed at the luxuriant fertility of the ſoil, both which, from their novelty, made a more lively impreſſion upon his imagination *, he did not find gold in ſuch quantity as was ſufficient to ſatisfy either the avarice of his followers, or the expectations of the court to which he was to return. The natives, as much aſtoniſhed at his eagerneſs in queſt of gold, as the Europeans were at their ignorance and ſimplicity, pointed towards the eaſt, where an iſland which they called Hayti was ſituated, in which that metal was more abundant than among them. Columbus ordered his ſquadron to bend its courſe thither; but Martin Alonſo Pinzon, impatient to be firſt who ſhould take Poſſeſſion of the treaſures which this country was ſuppoſed to contain, quitted his companions, regardleſs of all the admiral's ſignals to ſlacken ſail, until they ſhould come up with him.

Diſcovers the iſland Hiſpaniola.

COLUMBUS, retarded by contrary winds, did not reach Hayti till the ſixth of December. He called the port where he firſt touched St. Nicholas, and the iſland itſelf Eſpagnola, in honour of the kingdom by which he was employed; and it is the only country, of thoſe he had yet diſcovered, which has retained the name that he gave it. As he could neither meet with the Pinta, nor have any inter-

* See NOTE XIV.

courſe

courſe with the inhabitants, who fled in great conſternation towards the woods, he ſoon quitted St. Nicholas, and ſailing along the northern coaſt of the iſland, he entered another harbour, which he called Conception. Here he was more fortunate; his people overtook a woman who was flying from them, and after treating her with great kindneſs, diſmiſſed her with a preſent of ſuch toys as they knew were moſt valued in thoſe countries. The deſcription which ſhe gave to her countrymen of the humanity and wonderful qualities of the ſtrangers; their admiration of the trinkets, which ſhe ſhewed with exultation; and their eagerneſs to participate of the ſame favours; removed all their fears, and induced many of them to repair to the harbour. The ſtrange objects which they beheld, and the baubles which Columbus beſtowed upon them, amply gratified their curioſity and their wiſhes. They nearly reſembled the people of Guanahani and Cuba. They were naked like them, ignorant, and ſimple; and ſeemed to be equally unacquainted with all the arts which appear moſt neceſſary in poliſhed ſocieties; but they were gentle, credulous, and timid, to a degree which rendered it eaſy to acquire the aſcendant over them, eſpecially as their exceſſive admiration led them into the ſame error with the people of the other iſlands, in believing the Spaniards to be more than mortals, and deſcended immediately from Heaven. They poſſeſſed gold in greater abundance than their neighbours, which they readily exchanged for bells, beads, or pins; and, in this unequal traffic, both parties were highly pleaſed, each conſidering themſelves as gainers by the tranſaction. Here Columbus was viſited by a prince or *cazique* of the country. He appeared with all the pomp known among a ſimple people, being carried in a ſort of palanquin upon the ſhoul-

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ders of four men, and attended by many of his ſubjects, who ſerved him with great reſpect. His deportment was grave and ſtately, very reſerved towards his own people, but with Columbus and the Spaniards extremely courteous. He gave the admiral ſome thin plates of gold, and a girdle of curious workmanſhip, receiving in return preſents of ſmall value, but highly acceptable to him *.

Columbus, ſtill intent on diſcovering the mines which yielded gold, continued to interrogate all the natives with whom he had any intercouſe concerning their ſituation. They concurred in pointing out a mountainous country, which they called *Cibao*, at ſome diſtance from the ſea, and farther towards the eaſt. Struck with this ſound, which appeared to him the ſame with *Cipango*, the name by which Marco Polo, and other travellers to the eaſt, diſtinguiſh the iſlands of Japan, he no longer doubted with reſpect to the vicinity of the countries which he had diſcovered to the remote parts of Aſia; and, in full expectation of reaching ſoon thoſe regions which had been the object of his voyage, he directed his courſe towards the eaſt. He put into a commodious harbour, which he called St. Thomas, and found that diſtrict to be under the government of a powerful cazique, named *Guacanahari*, who, as he afterwards learned, was one of the five ſovereigns among whom the whole iſland was divided. He immediately ſent meſſengers to Columbus, who, in his name, delivered to him the preſent of a maſk curiouſly faſhioned, with the ears, noſe, and mouth of beaten gold, and invited him to the place of his reſidence, near the harbour now called Cape Francois, ſome leagues towards the eaſt. Columbus diſpatched ſome of his officers to viſit this prince, who, as he behaved

* Life of Columbus, c. 32. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. i. c. 15, &c.

with

with greater dignity, ſeemed to claim more attention. They returned, with ſuch favourable accounts both of the country and of the people, as made Columbus impatient for that interview with Guacanahari to which he had been invited. 1492.

One of his ſhips loſt.

He ſailed for this purpoſe from St. Thomas, on the twentyfourth of December, with a fair wind, and the ſea perfectly calm; and as, amidſt the multiplicity of his occupations, he had not ſhut his eyes for two days, he retired at midnight, in order to take ſome repoſe, having committed the helm to the pilot, with ſtrict injunctions not to quit it for a moment. The pilot, dreading no danger, careleſsly left the helm to an unexperienced cabin-boy, and the ſhip, carried away by a current, was daſhed againſt a rock. The violence of the ſhock awakened Columbus. He ran up to the deck. There, all was confuſion and deſpair. He alone retained preſence of mind. He ordered ſome of the ſailors to take a boat, and carry out an anchor aſtern; but, inſtead of obeying, they made off towards the Nigna, which was about half a league diſtant. He then commanded the maſts to be cut down, in order to lighten the ſhip; but all his endeavours were too late; the veſſel opened near the keel, and filled ſo faſt with water, that its loſs was inevitable. The ſmoothneſs of the ſea, and the timely aſſiſtance of boats from the Nigna, enabled the crew to ſave their lives. As ſoon as the iſlanders heard of this diſaſter, they crowded to the ſhore, with their prince Guacanahari at their head. Inſtead of taking advantage of the diſtreſs in which they beheld the Spaniards, to attempt any thing to their detriment, they lamented their misfortune with tears of ſincere condolence. Not ſatisfied with this unavailing expreſſion of their ſympathy, they put to ſea a vaſt number of canoes, and, under the direction of the Spaniards, aſſiſted in ſaving

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whatever could be got out of the wreck; and by the united labour of ſo many hands, almoſt every thing of value was carried aſhore. As faſt as the goods were landed, Guacanahari in perſon took charge of them. By his orders, they were all depoſited in one place, and armed centinels were poſted, who kept the multitude at a diſtance, in order to prevent them not only from embezzling, but from inſpecting too curiouſly what belonged to their gueſts *. Next morning this prince viſited Columbus, who was now on board the Nigna, and endeavoured to conſole him for his loſs, by offering all that he poſſeſſed to repair it †.

Diſtreſs of Columbus.

THE condition of Columbus was ſuch, that he ſtood in need of conſolation. He had hitherto procured no intelligence of the Pinta, and no longer doubted but that his treacherous aſſociate had ſet ſail for Europe, that he might have the merit of carrying the firſt tidings of the extraordinary diſcoveries which they had made, and might ſo far preoccupy the ear of their ſovereign, as to rob him of the glory and reward to which he was juſtly intitled. There remained but one veſſel, and that the ſmalleſt and moſt crazy of the ſquadron, to traverſe ſuch a vaſt ocean, and carry ſo many men back to Europe. Each of thoſe circumſtances was alarming, and filled the mind of Columbus with the utmoſt ſolicitude. His deſire of overtaking Pinzon, and of effacing the unfavourable impreſſions which his miſrepreſentations might make in Spain, made it neceſſary to return thither without delay. The difficulty of taking ſuch a number of perſons aboard the Nigna, confirmed him in an opinion, which the fertility of the country, and the gentle temper of the people, had already induced him to form. He reſolved to leave a part of his crew in

Reſolves to leave a part of his crew in the iſland.

* See NOTE XV. † Herrera, dec. 1. lib. i. c. 18.

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the iſland, that, by reſiding there, they might learn the language of the natives, ſtudy their diſpoſition, examine the nature of the country, ſearch for mines, prepare for the commodious ſettlement of the colony, with which he propoſed to return, and thus ſecure and facilitate the acquiſition of thoſe advantages which he expected from his diſcoveries. When he mentioned this to his men, all approved of the deſign; and from impatience under the fatigue of a long voyage, from the levity natural to ſailors, or from the hopes of amaſſing vaſt wealth in a country which afforded ſuch promiſing ſpecimens of its riches, many offered voluntarily to be among the number of thoſe who ſhould remain. 1492.

Obtains the conſent of the natives.

NOTHING was now wanting towards the execution of this ſcheme, but to obtain the conſent of Guacanahari; and his unſuſpicious ſimplicity ſoon preſented to the admiral a favourable opportunity of propoſing it. Columbus having, in the beſt manner he could, by broken words and ſigns, expreſſed ſome curioſity to know the cauſe which had moved the iſlanders to fly with ſuch precipitation upon the approach of his ſhips, he informed him that the country was much infeſted by the incurſions of certain people, whom he called *Carribeans*, who inhabited ſeveral iſlands to the ſouth eaſt. Theſe he deſcribed as a fierce and warlike race of men, who delighted in blood, and devoured the fleſh of the priſoners who were ſo unhappy as to fall into their hands; and as upon the firſt appearance of the Spaniards, they were ſuppoſed to be Carribeans, whom the natives, however numerous, durſt not face in battle, they had recourſe to their uſual method of ſecuring their ſafety, by flying into the thickeſt and moſt impenetrable woods. Guacanahari, while ſpeaking of thoſe dreadful invaders, diſcovered ſuch ſymptoms of terror, as well

as

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as ſuch conſciouſneſs of the inability of his own people to reſiſt them, as led Columbus to conclude that he would not be alarmed at the propoſition of any ſcheme which afforded him the proſpect of an additional ſecurity againſt their attacks. He inſtantly offered him the aſſiſtance of the Spaniards to repel his enemies; he engaged to take him and his people under the protection of the powerful monarch whom he ſerved, and offered to leave in the iſland ſuch a number of his men, as ſhould be ſufficient, not only to defend the inhabitants from future incurſions, but to avenge their paſt wrongs.

Builds a fort.

THE credulous prince cloſed eagerly with the propoſal, and thought himſelf already ſafe under the patronage of beings ſprung from Heaven, and ſuperior in power to mortal men. The ground was marked out for a ſmall fort, which Columbus called *Navidad*, becauſe he had landed there on Chriſtmas day. A deep ditch was drawn around it. The ramparts were fortified with palliſades, and the great guns, ſaved out of the admiral's ſhip, were planted upon them. In ten days the work was finiſhed; that ſimple race of men labouring with inconſiderate aſſiduity in erecting this firſt monument of their own ſervitude. During this time Columbus, by his careſſes and liberality, laboured to increaſe the high opinion which the natives entertained of the Spaniards. But while he endeavoured to inſpire them with confidence in their diſpoſition to do good, he wiſhed likewiſe to give them ſome ſtriking idea of their power to puniſh and deſtroy ſuch as were the objects of their juſt indignation. With this view, in preſence of a vaſt aſſembly, he drew up his men in order of battle, and made an oſtentatious but innocent diſplay of the ſharpneſs of the Spaniſh ſwords,

ſwords, of the force of their ſpears, and the operation of their croſs-bows. Theſe rude people, ſtrangers to the uſe of iron, and unacquainted with any hoſtile weapons, but arrows of reeds pointed with the bones of fiſhes, wooden ſwords, and javelins hardened in the fire, wondered and trembled. Before this ſurpriſe or fear had time to abate, he ordered the great guns to be fired. The ſudden exploſion ſtruck them with ſuch terror, that they fell flat to the ground, covering their faces with their hands; and when they beheld the aſtoniſhing effect of the bullets, they concluded that it was impoſſible to reſiſt men, who had the command of ſuch deſtructive inſtruments, and who came armed with thunder and lightning againſt their enemies.

His inſtructions to thoſe he left in it.

AFTER giving ſuch impreſſions both of the beneficence and power of the Spaniards, as might have rendered it eaſy to preſerve an aſcendent over the minds of the natives, Columbus appointed thirty-eight of his people to remain in the iſland. He entruſted the command of theſe to Diego de Arada, a gentleman of Cordova, inveſting him with the ſame powers which he himſelf had received from their Catholic Majeſties; and furniſhed him with every thing requiſite for the ſubſiſtence or defence of this infant colony. He ſtrictly enjoined them to maintain concord among themſelves, to yield an unreſerved obedience to their commander, to avoid giving offence to the natives by any violence or exaction, to cultivate the friendſhip of Guacanahari, but not to put themſelves in his power by ſtraggling in ſmall parties, or marching too far from the fort. He promiſed to reviſit them ſoon, with ſuch a reinforcement of ſtrength as might enable them to take full poſſeſſion of the country, and to reap all the fruits of their diſcoveries. In the mean

BOOK II. mean time, he engaged to mention their names to the king and queen, and to place their merit and ſervices in the moſt advantageous light *.

1493. HAVING thus taken every precaution for the ſecurity of the Colony, he left Navidad on the fourth of January, one thouſand four hundred and ninety-three, and ſteering towards the eaſt, diſcovered, and gave names to moſt of the harbours on the northern coaſt of the iſland. On the ſixth, he deſcribed the Pinta, and ſoon came up with her, after a ſeparation of more than ſix weeks. Pinzon endeavoured to juſtify his conduct, by pretending that he had been driven from his courſe by ſtreſs of weather, and prevented from returning by contrary winds. The admiral, though no ſtranger to his perfidious intentions, or the frivolity as well as falſehood of what he urged in his defence, was ſo ſenſible that this was not a proper time for venturing upon any high ſtrain of authority, and felt ſuch ſatisfaction in this junction with his conſort, which delivered him from many diſquieting apprehenſions, that lame as Pinzon's apology was, he admitted of it without difficulty, and reſtored him to favour. During his abſence from the admiral, Pinzon had viſited ſeveral harbours in the iſland, had acquired ſome gold by trafficking with the natives, but had made no diſcovery of any importance.

Reſolves to return to Europe.

FROM the condition of his ſhips, as well as the temper of his men, Columbus now found it neceſſary to haſten his return to Europe. The former, having ſuffered much during a voyage of ſuch unuſual duration were extremely leaky. The latter

* Oviedo ap. Ramuſio, iii. p. 82. E. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. i. c. 20. Life of Columbus, c. 34.

expreſſed

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expreſſed the utmoſt impatience to reviſit their native country, from which they had been ſo long abſent, and where they had things ſo wonderful and unheard-of to relate. Accordingly, on the ſixteenth of January, he directed his courſe towards the north eaſt, and ſoon loſt ſight of land. He had on board ſome of the natives, whom he had taken from the different iſlands which he diſcovered; and beſides the gold which was the chief object of reſearch, he had collected ſpecimens of all the productions which were likely to become ſubjects of commerce in the ſeveral countries, as well as many unknown birds, and other natural curioſities, which might attract the attention and excite the wonder of the people. The voyage was proſperous to the fourteenth of February, and they had advanced near five hundred leagues acroſs the Atlantic Ocean, when the wind began to riſe, and continued to blow with encreaſing rage, which terminated in a furious hurricane. Every expedient that the naval ſkill and experience of Columbus could deviſe was employed, in order to ſave the ſhips. But it was impoſſible to withſtand the violence of the ſtorm, and as they were ſtill far from any land, deſtruction ſeemed inevitable. The ſailors had recourſe to prayers to Almighty God, to the invocation of ſaints, to vows and charms, to every thing that religion dictates, or ſuperſtition ſuggeſts to the affrighted mind of man. No proſpect of deliverance appearing, they abandoned themſelves to deſpair, and expected every moment to be ſwallowed up in the waves. Beſides the paſſions which naturally agitate and alarm the human mind in ſuch awful ſituations, when certain death, in one of his moſt terrible forms, is before it, Columbus had to endure feelings of diſtreſs peculiar to himſelf. He dreaded that all the knowledge of the amazing diſcoveries which he had made was now to periſh; mankind were

A violent ſtorm ariſes.

The conduct of Columbus.

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were to be deprived of every merit that might have been derived from the happy ſucceſs of his ſchemes, and his own name would deſcend to poſterity as that of a raſh deluded adventurer, inſtead of being tranſmitted with the honour due to the author and conductor of the moſt noble enterpriſe that had ever been undertaken. Theſe reflections extinguiſhed all ſenſe of his own perſonal danger. Leſs affected with the loſs of life, than ſolicitous to preſerve the memory of what he had attempted and atchieved, he retired to his cabbin, and wrote upon parchment, a ſhort account of the voyage which he had made, of the courſe which he had taken, of the ſituation and riches of the countries which he had diſcovered, and of the colony that he had left there. Having wrapt up this in an oiled cloth, which he incloſed in a cake of wax, he put it into a caſk carefully ſtopped up, and threw it into the ſea, in hopes that ſome fortunate accident might preſerve a depoſit of ſo much importance to the world *.

Takes ſhelter in the Azores.

At length Providence interpoſed, to ſave a life reſerved for other ſervices. The wind abated, the ſea became calm, and on the evening of the fifteenth they diſcovered land; and though uncertain what it was, they made towards it. They ſoon knew it to be St. Mary, one of the Azores or weſtern iſles, ſubject to the crown of Portugal. There, after a violent conteſt with the governor, in which Columbus diſplayed no leſs ſpirit than prudence, he obtained a ſupply of freſh proviſions, and whatever elſe he needed. One circumſtance, however, greatly diſquieted him. The Pinta, of which he had loſt ſight on the firſt day of the hurricane, did not appear; he dreaded for ſome time that ſhe had foundered at ſea, and that all her crew had

* Life of Columbus, c. 37. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. ii. c. 1, 2. See NOTE XVI.

periſhed:

periſhed: afterwards, his former ſuſpicions recurred, and he became apprehenſive that Pinzon had borne away for Spain, that he might reach it before him, and by giving the firſt account of his diſcoveries, might obtain ſome ſhare of his fame. 1493.

In order to prevent this, he left the Azores as ſoon as the weather would permit. At no great diſtance from the coaſt of Spain, when almoſt at the end of his voyage, and beyond the reach of any diſaſter, another ſtorm aroſe, little inferior to the former in violence; and after driving before it during two days and two nights, he was forced to take ſhelter in the river Tagus. Upon application to the king of Portugal, he was allowed to come up to Liſbon; and, notwithſtanding the envy which it was natural for the Portugueſe to feel, when they beheld another nation entering upon that province of diſcovery which they had hitherto deemed peculiarly their own, and in its firſt eſſay, not only rivalling but eclipſing their fame, Columbus was received with all the marks of diſtinction due to a man who had performed things ſo extraordinary and unexpected. The king admitted him into his preſence, treated him with the higheſt reſpect, and liſtened to the account which he gave of his voyage with admiration mingled with regret. While Columbus on his part, enjoyed the ſatisfaction of deſcribing the importance of his diſcoveries, and of being now able to prove the ſolidity of his ſchemes to thoſe very perſons, who, with an ignorance diſgraceful to themſelves, and fatal to their country, had lately rejected them as the projects of a viſionary or deſigning adventurer *.

Feb. 24. Arrives at Liſbon.

March 4.

* Life of Columbus, c. 40, 41. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. ii. c. 3.

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1493. Returns to Spain.

COLUMBUS was ſo impatient to return to Spain, that he remained only five days in Liſbon. On the fifteenth of March he arrived in the Port of Palos, ſeven months and eleven days from the time when he ſet out thence upon his voyage. As ſoon as his ſhip was diſcovered approaching the port, all the inhabitants of Palos ran eagerly to the ſhore, in order to welcome their relations and fellow-citizens, and to hear tidings of their voyage. When the proſperous iſſue of it was known, when they beheld the ſtrange people, the unknown animals, and ſingular productions brought from the countries which had been diſcovered, the effuſion of joy was general and unbounded. The bells were rung, the cannon fired; Columbus was received at landing with royal honours, and all the people, in ſolemn proceſſion, accompanied him and his crew to the church, where they returned thanks to Heaven, which had ſo wonderfully conducted and crowned with ſucceſs a voyage of greater length and of more importance, than had been attempted in any former age. On the evening of the ſame day, he had the ſatisfaction of ſeeing the Pinta, which the violence of the tempeſt had driven far to the north, enter the harbour.

His reception.

THE firſt care of Columbus was to inform the king and queen, who were then at Barcelona, of his arrival and ſucceſs. Ferdinand and Iſabella, no leſs aſtoniſhed than delighted with this unexpected event, returned an anſwer in terms the moſt reſpectful and flattering to Columbus, requeſting him to repair immediately to court, that from his own mouth, they might receive a full detail of his extraordinary ſervices and diſcoveries. During his journey to Barcelona, the people crowded from the adjacent country, following him every where with admiration

tion and applauſe. His entrance into the city was conducted, by order of Ferdinand and Iſabella, with pomp ſuitable to the great event, which added ſuch diſtinguiſhing luſtre to their reign. The people whom he brought along with him from the countries which he had diſcovered, marched firſt, and by their ſingular complexion, the wild peculiarity of their features, and uncouth finery, appeared like men of another ſpecies. Next to them were carried the ornaments of gold, faſhioned by the rude art of the natives, the grains of gold found in the mountains, and duſt of the ſame metal gathered in the rivers. After theſe appeared the various commodities of the new diſcovered countries, together with their curious productions. Columbus himſelf cloſed the proceſſion, and attracted the eyes of all the ſpectators, who gazed with admiration on the extraordinary man, whoſe ſuperior ſagacity and fortitude had conducted their countrymen, by a route concealed from paſt ages, to the knowledge of a new world. Ferdinand and Iſabella received him clad in their royal robes, and ſeated upon a throne, under a magnificent canopy. When he approached they ſtood up, and raiſing him as he kneeled to kiſs their hands, commanded him to take his ſeat upon a chair prepared for him, and to give a circumſtantial account of his voyage. He delivered it with a gravity and compoſure no leſs ſuitable to the diſpoſition of the Spaniſh nation, than to the dignity of the audience in which he ſpoke, and with that modeſt ſimplicity, which characteriſes men of ſuperior minds; who, ſatisfied with having performed great actions, court not vain applauſe by an oſtentatious diſplay of their exploits. When he had finiſhed his narration, the king and queen, kneeling down, offered up a ſolemn thanks to Almighty God for the diſcovery of

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thoſe

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those new regions, from which they expected so many advantages to flow in upon the kingdoms subject to their government *. Every mark of honour that gratitude or admiration could suggest was conferred upon Columbus. Letters patent were issued, confirming to him and to his heirs all the privileges contained in the capitulation concluded at Santa Fé; his family was ennobled; the king and queen, and, after their example, the courtiers, treated him, on every occasion, with all the ceremonious respect paid to persons of the highest rank. But what pleased him most, as it gratified the enterprising activity of his mind, bent continually upon great objects, was an order to equip, without delay, an armament of such force, as might enable him not only to take possession of the countries which he had already discovered, but to go in search of those more opulent regions, which he still confidently expected to find †.

Astonishment of mankind at his discoveries.

While preparations were making for this expedition, the fame of Columbus's successful voyage spread over Europe, and excited general attention. The multitude, struck with amazement when they heard that a new world had been found, could hardly believe an event so much above their conception. Men of science, capable of comprehending the nature, and of discerning the effects, of this great discovery, received the account of it with admiration and joy. They spoke of it with rapture, and congratulated one another upon their felicity, in having lived at the period when, by this extraordinary event, the boundaries of human knowledge were so much extended, and such a new

* See NOTE XVII.

† Life of Columbus, c. 42, 43. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. ii. c. 3.

field

field of inquiry and obſervation opened, as would lead mankind to a perfect acquaintance with the ſtructure and productions of the habitable globe *. Various opinions and conjectures were formed concerning the new-found countries, and what diviſion of the earth they belonged to. Columbus adhered tenaciouſly to his original opinion, that they ſhould be reckoned a part of thoſe vaſt regions of Aſia, comprehended under the general name of India. This ſentiment was confirmed by the obſervations which he made concerning the productions of the countries which he had diſcovered. Gold was known to abound in India, and he had met with ſuch promiſing ſamples of it in the iſlands which he viſited, as led him to believe that rich mines of it might be found. Cotton, another production of the Eaſt Indies, was common there. The pimento of the iſlands he imagined to be a ſpecies of the Eaſt-Indian pepper. He miſtook a root, ſomewhat reſembling rhubarb, for that valuable drug, which was then ſuppoſed to be a plant peculiar to the Eaſt Indies †. The birds which he had brought home were adorned with the ſame rich plumage that diſtinguiſhes thoſe of India. The alligatorof the one country appeared to be the ſame with the crocodile of the other. After weighing all theſe circumſtances, not only the Spaniards, but the other nations of Europe, ſeem to have adopted the opinion of Columbus. The countries which he had diſcovered were conſidered as a part of India. In conſequence of this notion, the name of Indies is given to them by Ferdinand and Iſabella, in a ratification of their former agreement, which was granted to Columbus upon his return ‡. Even after the error which gave riſe to this opinion was detected, and the true poſition of the New World

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Diſtinguiſhed by the name of the Weſt Indies.

* P. Mart. epiſt. 133, 134, 135. See NOTE XVIII.
† Herrera, dec. 1. lib. i. c. 20. Gomara Hiſt. c. 17.
‡ Life of Columbus, c. 44.

was

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was ascertained, the name has remained, and the appellation of *West Indies* is given by all the people of Europe to the country, and that of *Indians* to its inhabitants.

Preparations for a second voyage.

THE name by which Columbus distinguished the countries which he had discovered was so inviting; the specimens of their riches and fertility, which he produced, were so considerable; and the reports of his companions, delivered frequently with the exaggeration natural to travellers, so favourable; that they excited a wonderful spirit of enterprise among the Spaniards. Though little accustomed to naval expeditions, they were impatient to set out upon another voyage. Volunteers of every rank solicited to be employed. Allured by the vast prospects which opened to their ambition and avarice, neither the length nor danger of the navigation intimidated them. Cautious as Ferdinand was, and averse to every thing new or adventurous, he seemed to have catched the same spirit with his subjects. Under its influence, preparations for a second expedition were carried on with a rapidity unusual among the Spaniards, and to an extent that would be deemed not inconsiderable in the present age. The fleet consisted of seventeen ships, some of which were of good burden. It had on board fifteen hundred persons, among whom were many of noble families, who had served in honourable stations. The greater part of these being destined to remain in the country, they were furnished with every thing requisite for conquest or settlement, with all kinds of European domestic animals, with such seeds and plants as were most likely to thrive in the climate of the West Indies, with utensils and Instruments of every sort, and with such artificers as might be most useful in an infant colony *.

* Herrera, dec. 1. lib. ii. c. 5. Life of Columbus, c. 45.

BUT,

1493.

But, formidable and well provided as this fleet was, Ferdinand and Iſabella did not reſt their title to the poſſeſſion of the newly-diſcovered countries upon its operations alone. The example of the Portugueſe, as well as the ſuperſtition of the age, made it neceſſary to obtain from the Roman pontiff a grant of thoſe territories which they wiſhed to occupy. The Pope, as the vicar and repreſentative of Jeſus Chriſt, was ſuppoſed to have a right of dominion over all the kingdoms of the earth. Alexander VI. a pontiff infamous for every crime that diſgraces humanity, filled the papal throne at that time. As he was born Ferdinand's ſubject, and very ſolicitous to ſecure the protection of that monarch, in order to facilitate the execution of his ambitious ſchemes in favour of his own family, he inſtantly complied with his requeſt. By an act of liberality which coſt him nothing, and that ſerved to eſtabliſh the juriſdiction and pretenſions of the papal ſee, he beſtowed on Ferdinand and Iſabella all the countries inhabited by Infidels which they had diſcovered, or ſhould diſcover; and in virtue of that power which he derived from Jeſus Chriſt, he veſted in the crown of Caſtile a right to vaſt regions, to the poſſeſſion of which he himſelf was ſo far from having any title, that he was unacquainted with their ſituation, and even with their exiſtence. As it was neceſſary to prevent this grant from interfering with that formerly made to the crown of Portugal, he appointed that a line, ſuppoſed to be drawn from pole to pole, a hundred leagues to the weſtward of the Azores, ſhould ſerve as the limit between them; and, in the plenitude of his power, conferred all to the eaſt of this imaginary line upon the Portugueſe, and all to the weſt of it upon the Spaniards *. Zeal for propagating the Chriſtian faith was the conſideration employed by Ferdinand

The right of Spain to the New World confirmed by the Pope.

* Herrera, dec. 1. lib. ii. c. 4. Torquemada Mon. Ind. lib. xviii. c. 3.

BOOK II. 1493.

in ſoliciting this bull, and is mentioned by Alexander as his chief motive for iſſuing it. In order to manifeſt ſome concern for this laudable object, ſeveral friars, under the direction of Father Boyl, a Catalonian monk of great reputation, as apoſtolical vicar, were appointed to accompany Columbus, and to devote themſelves to the inſtruction of the natives. The Indians whom Columbus had brought along with him, having received ſome tincture of Chriſtian knowledge, were baptized with much ſolemnity, the king himſelf, the prince his ſon, and the chief perſons of his court, ſtanding as their godfathers. Thoſe firſt fruits of the New World have not been followed by ſuch an increaſe as pious men wiſhed, and had reaſon to expect.

Second voyage of Columbus.

FERDINAND and Iſabella having thus acquired a title, which was then deemed completely valid, to extend their diſcoveries, and to eſtabliſh their dominion over ſuch a vaſt portion of the globe, nothing now retarded the departure of the fleet. Columbus was extremely impatient to reviſit the colony which he had left, and to purſue that career of glory upon which he had entered. He ſet ſail from the bay of Cadiz on the twenty-fifth of September, and touching again at the iſland of Gomera, he ſteered farther towards the ſouth than in his former voyage. By holding his courſe, he enjoyed more ſteadily the benefit of the regular winds, which reign within the tropics, and was carried towards a large cluſter of iſlands, ſituated conſiderably to the eaſt of thoſe which he had already diſcovered. On the twenty-ſixth day after his departure from Gomera, he made land *. It was one of the Caribbee or Leeward Iſlands, to which he gave the name of Deſeada, on account of the impatience of his crew to diſcover ſome part of the New World. After

Nov. 2.

* Oviedo ap. Ramuſ. iii. 85. B.

this

this he visited successively Dominica, Marigalante, Guadalupe, Antigua, St. John de Porto Rico, and several other islands, scattered in his way as he advanced towards the north-west. All these he found to be inhabited by that fierce race of people whom Guacanahari had painted in such frightful colours. His descriptions appeared not to have been exaggerated. The Spaniards, as often as they landed, met with such a reception as convinced them of their martial and daring spirit; and they discovered in their habitations the relics of those horrid feasts which they had made upon the bodies of their enemies taken in war.

BOOK II. 1493.

Arrives at Hispaniola. Nov. 22.

BUT as Columbus was eager to know the state of the colony which he had planted, and to supply it with those necessaries of which he supposed it to be in want, he made no stay in any of those islands, and proceeded directly to Hispaniola *. When he arrived off Navidad, the station in which he had left the thirty-eight men under the command of Arada, he was astonished that none of them appeared, and expected every moment to see them running with transports of joy to welcome their countrymen. Full of solicitude about their safety, and foreboding in his mind what had befallen them, he rowed instantly to land. All the natives from whom he might have received information had fled. But the fort which he had built was entirely demolished, and the tattered garments, the broken arms aad utensils scattered about it, left no room to doubt concerning the unhappy fate of the garrison †.

* P. Martyr. dec. p. 15. 18. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. ii. c. 7. Life of Columbus, c. 46, &c. † Hist. de Cura de los Palacios. MS.

BOOK II.

1493.

The fate of the men whom he left there.

While the Spaniards were ſhedding tears over thoſe ſad memorials of their fellow-citizens, a brother of the cazique Guacanahari arrived. From him Columbus received a particular detail of what had happened after his departure from the iſland. The familiar intercourſe of the Indians with the Spaniards tended gradually to diminiſh the ſuperſtitious veneration with which their firſt appearance had inſpired that ſimple people. By their own indiſcretion and ill conduct, the Spaniards ſpeedily effaced thoſe favourable impreſſions, and ſoon convinced the natives, that they had all the wants, and weakneſſes, and paſſions of men. As ſoon as the powerful reſtraints which the preſence and authority of Columbus impoſed was withdrawn, the garriſon threw off all regard for the officer whom he had inveſted with command. Regardleſs of the prudent inſtructions which he had given them, every man became independent, and gratified his deſires without controul. The gold, the women, the proviſions of the natives, were all the prey of thoſe licentious oppreſſors. They roamed in ſmall parties over the iſland, extending their rapacity and inſolence to every corner of it. Gentle and timid as the people were, thoſe unprovoked injuries at length exhauſted their patience, and rouzed their courage. The cazique of Cibao, whoſe territories the Spaniards chiefly infeſted on account of the gold which they contained, ſurprized and cut off ſeveral of them, while they ſtraggled in as perfect ſecurity as if their conduct had been altogether inoffenſive. He then aſſembled his ſubjects, and ſurrounding the fort, ſet it on fire. Some of the Spaniards were killed in defending it, the reſt periſhed in attempting to make their eſcape by croſſing an arm of the ſea. Guacanahari, whom all their exactions had not alienated from the Spaniards, took arms in their behalf,

behalf, and endeavouring to protect them, had received a wound, by which he was ſtill confined *. BOOK II. 1493.

THOUGH this account was far from removing the ſuſpicions which the Spaniards entertained with reſpect to the fidelity of Guacanahari, Columbus perceived ſo clearly that this was not a proper juncture for inquiring into his conduct with ſcrupulous accuracy, that he rejected the advice of ſeveral of his officers, who urged him to ſeize the perſon of that prince, and to revenge the death of their countrymen by attacking his ſubjects. He repreſented to them the neceſſity of ſecuring the friendſhip of ſome potentate of the country, in order to facilitate the ſettlement which they intended, and the danger of driving the natives to unite in ſome deſperate attempt againſt them, by ſuch an ill-timed and unavailing exerciſe of rigour. Inſtead of waſting his time in puniſhing paſt wrongs, he took precautions for preventing any future injury. With this view, he made choice of a ſituation more healthy and commodious than that of Navidad. He traced out the plan of a town in a large plain near a ſpacious bay, and obliged every perſon to put his hand to a work on which their common ſafety depended, the houſes and ramparts were ſoon ſo far advanced by their united labour, as to afford them ſhelter and ſecurity. This riſing city, the firſt that the Europeans founded in the New world, he named Iſabella, in honour of his patroneſs the queen of Caſtile †. His prudent conduct.

IN carrying on this neceſſary work, Columbus had not only to ſuſtain all the hardſhips, and to encounter Diſcontent of his followers.

* P. Martyr, decad. p. 22, &c. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. ii. c. 7. 9. Life of Columbus, c. 49, 56.

† Life of Columbus, c. 51. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. ii. c. 10.

BOOK II. 1493.

counter all the difficulties, to which infant colonies are expoſed when they ſettle in an uncultivated country, but he had to contend with what was more inſuperable, the lazineſs, the impatience, and mutinous diſpoſition of his followers. By the enervating influence of a hot climate, the natural inactivity of the Spaniards ſeemed to increaſe. Many of them were gentlemen, unaccuſtomed to the fatigue of bodily labour, and all had engaged in the enterpriſe with the ſanguine hopes excited by the ſplendid and exaggerated deſcriptions of thoſe who returned with Columbus from his firſt voyage, or by his own miſtaken idea that the country which he had diſcovered was either the Cipango of Marco Polo, or the Ophir *, from which Solomon imported thoſe precious commodities which ſuddenly diffuſed ſuch extraordinary riches through his kingdom. But when, inſtead of that golden harveſt which they had expected to reap without toil or pains, the Spaniards ſaw that their proſpect of wealth was remote as well as uncertain, and that it could not be attained but by the ſlow and perſevering efforts of induſtry, the diſappointment of thoſe chimerical hopes occaſioned ſuch dejection of mind as bordered on deſpair, and led to general diſcontent. In vain did Columbus endeavour to revive their ſpirits by pointing out the fertility of the ſoil, and exhibiting the ſpecimens of gold daily brought in from different parts of the iſland. They had not patience to wait for the gradual returns which the former might yield, and the latter they deſpiſed as ſcanty and inconſiderable. The ſpirit of diſaffection ſpread, and a conſpiracy was formed, which might have been fatal to Columbus and the colony. Happily he diſcovered it, and ſeizing the ringleaders, puniſhed ſome of them, ſent others priſoners into Spain, whither he diſpatched twelve

* P. Martyr. dec. p. 29.

of

of the ſhips which had ſerved as tranſports, with an earneſt requeſt for a reinforcement of men, and a large ſupply of proviſions *. BOOK II.

MEANWHILE in order to baniſh that idleneſs which by allowing his people leiſure to brood over their diſappointment, nouriſhed the ſpirit of diſcontent, he planned ſeveral expeditions into the interior part of the country. He ſent a detachment, under the command of Alonſo de Ojeda, a vigilant and enterpriſing officer, to viſit the diſtrict of Cibao, which was ſaid to yield the greateſt quantity of gold, and followed him in perſon with the main body of his troops. In this expedition, he diſplayed all the pomp of military magnificence that he could exhibit, in order to ſtrike the imagination of the natives. He marched with colours flying, with martial muſic, and with a ſmall body of cavalry that paraded ſometimes in the front and ſometimes in the rear. As thoſe were the firſt horſes that appeared in the New world, they were objects of terror no leſs than admiration to the Indians, who having no tame animals themſelves, were unacquainted with that vaſt acceſſion of power, which man hath acquired by ſubjecting them to his dominion. They imagined them to be rational creatures, that formed but one animal with their riders. They were aſtoniſhed at their ſpeed, and conſidered their impetuoſity and ſtrength as irreſiſtible. But while Columbus endeavoured to inſpire the natives with a dread of his power, he did not neglect the arts of gaining their love and confidence. He adhered ſcrupulouſly to the principles of integrity and juſtice in all his tranſactions with them, and treated them, on every occaſion, not only with hu-

1494. Examines into the ſtate of the country.

March 12.

* Herrera, dec. 1. lib. ii. c. 10, 11.

manity,

BOOK II. 1494.

manity, but with indulgence. The diſtrict of Cibao anſwered the deſcription given of it by the natives. It was mountainous and uncultivated, but in every river and brook gold was gathered either in duſt or in grains, ſome of which were of conſiderable ſize. The Indians had never opened any mines in ſearch of gold. To penetrate into the bowels of the earth, and to refine the rude ore, were operations too complicated for their talents and induſtry, and they had no ſuch high value for gold as to put their ingenuity and invention upon the ſtretch in order to obtain it *. The ſmall quantity of that precious metal which they poſſeſſed, was either picked up in the beds of the rivers, or waſhed from the mountains by the heavy rains which fall within the tropics. But, from thoſe indications, the Spaniards could no longer doubt that the contrary contained rich treaſures in its bowels, of which they hoped ſoon to be maſters †. In order to ſecure the command of this valuable province, Columbus erected a ſmall fort to which he gave the name of St. Thomas, by way of ridicule upon ſome of his incredulous followers, who would not believe that the country produced gold, until they ſaw it with their own eyes, and touched it with their hands ‡.

The diſtreſs and diſaffection of the colony increaſe.

THE account of thoſe promiſing appearances of wealth in the country of Cibao came very ſeaſonably to comfort the deſponding colony, which was affected with diſtreſſes of various kinds. The ſtock of proviſions which had been brought from Europe was moſtly conſumed; what remained was ſo much corrupted by the heat and moiſture of the climate, as to be almoſt unfit

* Oviedo, lib. ii. p. 90. A. † P. Martyr. dec. p. 32.
‡ Herrera, dec. 1. lib. ii. c. 12. Life of Columbus, c. 52.

for

for uſe; the natives cultivated ſo ſmall a portion of ground, and with ſo little ſkill, that it hardly yielded what was ſufficient for their own ſubſiſtence; the Spaniards at Iſabella had hitherto neither time nor leiſure to clear the ſoil, ſo as to reap any conſiderable fruits of their own induſtry. On all theſe accounts, they became afraid of periſhing with hunger, and were reduced to live already at ſhort allowance. At the ſame time, the diſeaſes predominant in the torrid zone, and which rage chiefly in thoſe uncultivated countries, where the hand of induſtry has not opened the woods, drained the marſhes, and confined the rivers within a certain channel, began to ſpread among them. Alarmed at their violence and unuſual ſymptoms, they exclaimed againſt Columbus and his companions in the former voyage, who, by their ſplendid but deceitful deſcriptions of Hiſpaniola, had allured them to quit their native country for a barbarous uncultivated land, where they muſt either be cut off by famine, or die of unknown diſtempers. Several of the officers and perſons of note, inſtead of checking, joined in thoſe ſeditious complaints. Father Boyl, the apoſtolical vicar, was one of the moſt turbulent and outrageous. It required all the authority and addreſs of Columbus to re-eſtabliſh ſubordination and tranquillity in the colony. Threats and promiſes were alternately employed for this purpoſe; but nothing contributed more to ſooth the malcontents than the proſpect of finding, in the mines of Cibao, ſuch a rich ſtore of treaſures as would be a recompence for all their ſufferings, and efface the memoty of former diſappointments. 1494.

Columbus attempts new diſcoveries.

When, by his unwearied endeavours, concord and order were ſo far reſtored, that he could venture to leave the iſland, Columbus reſolved to purſue his diſcoveries, that he might be able to aſcertain whether

BOOK II. 1494.

ther thoſe new countries with which he had opened a communication, were connected with any region of the earth already known, or whether they were to be conſidered as a ſeparate portion of the globe, hitherto unviſited. He appointed his brother Don Diego, with the aſſiſtance of a council of officers, to govern the iſland in his abſence; and gave the command of a body of ſoldiers to Don Pedro Margarita, with which he was to viſit the different parts of the iſland, and endeavour to eſtabliſh the authority of the Spaniards among the inhabitants. Having left them very particular inſtructions with reſpect to their conduct, he weighed anchor on the twenty-fourth of April, with one ſhip and two ſmall barks under his command. During a tedious voyage of full five months, he had a trial of almoſt all the numerous hardſhips to which perſons of his profeſſion are expoſed, without making any diſcovery of importance, except the iſland of Jamaica. As he ranged along the ſouthern coaſt of Cuba*, he was entangled in a labyrinth formed by an incredible number of ſmall iſlands, to which he gave the name of the Queen's Garden. In this unknown courſe, among rocks and ſhelves, he was retarded by contrary winds, aſſaulted by furious ſtorms, and alarmed with the terrible thunder and lightning which is often almoſt inceſſant between the tropics. At length his proviſions fell ſhort; his crew, exhauſted with fatigue as well as hunger, murmured and threatened, and were ready to proceed to the moſt deſperate extremities againſt him. Beſet with danger in ſuch various forms, he was obliged to keep continual watch, to obſerve every occurrence with his own eyes, to iſſue every order, and to ſuperintend the execution of it. On no occaſion, was the extent of his ſkill and experience as a navigator ſo much tried. To theſe the ſquadron owed

* See NOTE XIX.

owed its ſafety. But this unremitted fatigue of body and intenſe application of mind, overpowering his conſtitution, though naturally vigorous and robuſt, brought on a feveriſh diſorder, which terminated in a lethargy, that deprived him of ſenſe and memory, and had almoſt proved fatal to his life *.

1494.

Sept. 27. On his return, finds his brother Bartholomew at Iſabella.

But, on his return to Hiſpaniola, the ſudden emotion of joy which he felt upon meeting with his brother Bartholomew at Iſabella, occaſioned ſuch a flow of ſpirits as contributed greatly to his recovery. It was now thirteen years ſince the two brothers, whom ſimilarity of talents united in cloſe friendſhip, had ſeparated from each other, and during that long period there had been no intercourſe between them. Bartholomew, after finiſhing his negociation in the court of England, had ſet out for Spain by the way of France. At Paris he received an account of the extraordinary diſcoveries which his brother had made in his firſt voyage, and that he was then preparing to embark on a ſecond expedition. Though this naturally induced him to purſue his journey with the utmoſt diſpatch, Columbus had ſailed for Hiſpaniola before he reached Spain. Ferdinand and Iſabella received him with the reſpect due to the brother of a man whoſe merit and ſervices rendered him ſo conſpicuous; and as they knew what conſolation his preſence would afford to Columbus, they perſuaded him to take the command of three ſhips, which they had appointed to carry proviſions to the colony at Iſabella †.

* Life of Columbus, c. 54, &c. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. ii. c. 13, 14. P. Martyr. dec. p. 34, &c.

† Herrera, dec. 1. lib. ii. c. 15.

BOOK II.

1494. The Indians take arms againſt the Spaniards.

He could not have arrived at any juncture when Columbus ſtood more in need of a friend capable of aſſiſting him with his counſels, or of dividing with him the cares and burden of government. For although the proviſions now brought from Europe, afforded a temporary relief to the Spaniards from the calamities of famine, the ſupply was not in ſuch a quantity as to ſupport them long, and the iſland did not hitherto yield what was ſufficient for their ſuſtenance. They were threatened with another danger, ſtill more formidable than the return of ſcarcity, and which demanded more immediate attention. No ſooner did Columbus leave the iſland on his voyage of diſcovery, than the ſoldiers under Margarita, as if they had been ſet free from diſcipline and ſubordination, ſcorned all reſtraint. Inſtead of conforming to the prudent inſtructions of Columbus, they diſperſed in ſtraggling parties over the iſland, lived at diſcretion upon the natives, waſted their proviſions, ſeized their women, and treated that inoffenſive race of men with all the inſolence of military oppreſſion *.

As long as the Indians had any proſpect that their ſufferings might come to a period by the voluntary departure of the invaders, they ſubmitted in ſilence, and diſſembled their ſorrow; but they now perceived that the yoke would be as permanent as it was intolerable. The Spaniards had built a town, and ſurrounded it with ramparts. They had erected forts in different places. They had incloſed and ſown ſeverals fields. It was apparent that they came not to viſit the country, but to ſettle in it. Though the number of thoſe ſtrangers was not conſiderable, the ſtate of cultivation among this rude

* P. Martyr, dec. p. 47.

people

people was so imperfect, and in such exact proportion to their own consumption, that it was with difficulty they could afford subsistence to their new guests. Their own mode of life was so indolent and inactive, the warmth of the climate so enervating, the constitution of their bodies naturally so feeble, and so unaccustomed to the laborious exertions of industry, that they were satisfied with a proportion of food amazingly small. A handful of maize, or a little of the insipid bread made of the cassada-root, was sufficient to support men, whose strength and spirits were not exhausted by any vigorous efforts either of body or mind. The Spaniards, though the most abstemious of all the European nations, appeared to them excessively voracious. One Spaniard consumed as much as several Indians. This keenness of appetite surprised them so much, and seemed to them to be so insatiable, that they supposed the Spaniards had left their own country, because it did not produce as much as was requisite to gratify their immoderate desire of food, and had come among them in quest of nourishment *. Self-preservation prompted them to wish for the departure of guests who wasted so far their slender stock of provisions. The injuries which they suffered, added to their impatience for this event. They had long expected that the Spaniards would retire of their own accord. They now perceived that, in order to avert the destruction with which they were threatened, either by the slow consumption of famine, or by the violence of their oppressors, it was necessary to assume courage to attack those formidable invaders with united force, and drive them from the settlements of which they had violently taken possession. 1494.

* Herrera dec. 1. lib. ii. c. 17.

BOOK II.

1494. War with them.

SUCH were the the ſentiments which univerſally prevailed among the Indians, when Columbus returned to Iſabella. Inflamed by the unprovoked outrages of the Spaniards, with a degree of rage of which their gentle natures, formed to ſuffer and ſubmit, ſeemed hardly ſuſceptible, they waited only for a ſignal from their leaders to fall upon the colony. Some of the caziques had already ſurprized and cut off ſeveral of the ſtragglers. The dread of this impending danger united the Spaniards, and re-eſtabliſhed the authority of Columbus, as they ſaw no proſpect of ſafety but in committing themſelves to his prudent guidance. It was now neceſſary to have recourſe to arms, the employing of which againſt the Indians, Columbus had hitherto avoided with the greateſt ſolicitude. Unequal as the conflict may ſeem, between the naked inhabitants of the New World armed with clubs, ſticks hardened in the fire, wooden ſwords, and arrows pointed with bones or flints; and troops accuſtomed to the diſcipline, and provided with the inſtruments of deſtruction known in the European art of war, the ſituation of the Spaniards was far from being exempt from danger. The vaſt ſuperiority of the natives in number, compenſated many defects. An handful of men was about to encounter a whole nation. One adverſe event, or even any unforeſeen delay in determining the fate of the war, might prove fatal to the Spaniards. Conſcious that the ſucceſs depended on the vigour and rapidity of his operations, Columbus inſtantly aſſembled his forces. They were reduced to a very ſmall number. Diſeaſes, engendered by the warmth and humidity of the country, had raged among them with much violence; experience had not yet taught them the art either of curing theſe, or the precautions requiſite for guarding againſt them; two-thirds of the original adventurers were dead, and many of thoſe who ſurvived

vived were incapable of ſervice*. The body which took the field conſiſted only of two hundred foot, twenty horſe, and twenty large dogs; and how ſtrange ſoever it may ſeem to mention the laſt as compoſing part of a military force, they were not perhaps the leaſt formidable and deſtructive of the whole, when employed againſt naked and timid Indians. All the caziques of the iſland, Guacanahari excepted, who retained an inviolable attachment to the Spaniards, were in arms to oppoſe Columbus, with forces amounting, if we may believe the Spaniſh hiſtorians, to an hundred thouſand men. Inſtead of attempting to draw the Spaniards into the faſtneſſes of the woods and mountains, they were ſo imprudent as to take their ſtation in the Vega Real, the moſt open plain in the country. Columbus did not allow them time to perceive their error, or alter their poſition. He attacked them during the night, when undiſciplined troops are leaſt capable of acting with union and concert, and obtained an eaſy and bloodleſs victory. The conſternation with which the Indians were filled by the noiſe and havoc made by the fire-arms, by the impetuous force of the cavalry, and the fierce onſet of the dogs was ſo great, that they threw down their weapons, and fled without attempting reſiſtance. Many were ſlain; more were taken priſoners, and reduced to ſervitude †; and ſo thoroughly were the reſt intimidated, that from that moment they abandoned themſelves to deſpair, relinquiſhing all thoughts of contending with aggreſſors whom they deemed invincible.

BOOK II.

1495. March 24.

COLUMBUS employed ſeveral months in marching through the iſland, and in ſubjecting it to the Spaniſh government without meeting with any op-

A tax impoſed upon them.

* Life of Columbus, c. 61. † See NOTE XX.

poſition.

BOOK II. 1495.

position. He impoſed a tribute upon all the inhabitants above the age of fourteen. Each perſon who lived in thoſe diſtricts where gold was found, was obliged to pay quarterly as much gold duſt as filled a hawk's bell; from thoſe in other parts of the country, twenty-five pounds of cotton were demanded. This was the firſt regular taxation of the Indians, and ſerved as a precedent for exactions ſtill more intolerable. Such an heavy impoſition was extremely contrary to thoſe maxims which Columbus had hitherto inculcated with reſpect to the mode of treating them. But intrigues were carrying on in the court of Spain at this juncture, in order to undermine his power and diſcredit his operations, which conſtrained him to depart from his own ſyſtem of adminiſtration. Several unfavourable accounts of his conduct, as well as of the countries diſcovered by him, had been tranſmitted to Spain. Margarita and Father Boyl were now at court; and in order to juſtify their own conduct, or to gratify their reſentment, watched with malevolent attention for every opportunity of ſpreading inſinuations to his detriment. Many of the courtiers viewed his growing reputation and power with envious eyes. Fonſeca, the archdeacon of Seville, who was intruſted with the chief direction of Indian affairs, had conceived ſuch an unfavourable opinion of Columbus, for ſome reaſon which the contemporary wrirers have not mentioned, that he liſtened with partiality to every invective againſt him. It was not eaſy for an unfriended ſtranger, unpractiſed in courtly arts, to counteract the machinations of ſo many enemies. Columbus ſaw that there was but one method of ſupporting his own credit, and of ſilencing all his adverſaries. He muſt produce ſuch a quantity of gold, as would not only juſtify what

what he had reported with reſpect to the richneſs of the country, but encourage Ferdinand and Iſabella to perſevere in proſecuting his plans. The neceſſity of obtaining it, forced him not only to impoſe this heavy tax upon the Indians, but to exact payment of it with extreme rigour; and may be pleaded in excuſe for his deviating on this occaſion from the mildneſs and humanity with which he uniformly treated that unhappy people *. 1495.

Fatal effects of that meaſure.

THE labour, attention, and foreſight which the Indians were obliged to employ in procuring the tribute demanded of them, appeared the moſt intolerable of all evils, to men accuſtomed to paſs their days in a careleſs, improvident indolence. They were incapable of ſuch a regular and perſevering exertion of induſtry, and felt it ſuch a grievous reſtraint upon their liberty that they had recourſe to an expedient for obtaining deliverance from this yoke which demonſtrates the exceſs of their impatience and deſpair. They formed a ſcheme of ſtarving thoſe oppreſſors whom they durſt not attempt to expel; and from the opinion which they entertained with reſpect to the voracious appetite of the Spaniards, they concluded the execution of it to be very practicable. With this view, they ſuſpended all the operations of agricultute; they ſowed no maize, they pulled up the roots of the manioc which were planted, and retiring to the moſt inacceſſible parts of the mountains, left the uncultivated plains to their enemies. This deſperate reſolution produced ſome part of the effects which they expected. The Spaniards were reduced to extreme want; but they received ſuch ſeaſonable ſupplies of proviſions from Europe, and found ſo many reſources in their own ingenuity and induſtry, that they ſuffered no great loſs of men. The wretched Indians were the vic-

* Herrera, dec. 1. lib. ii. c. 17.

BOOK II.

1495.

tims of their own ill-concerted policy. A vaſt multitude ſhut up among barren mountains, without any food but the ſpontaneous productions of the earth, ſoon felt the utmoſt diſtreſſes of famine. This brought on contagious diſeaſes; and, in the courſe of a few months, more than a third part of the inhabitants of the iſland periſhed, after experiencing miſery in all its various forms *.

Intrigues againſt Columbus in the court of Spain.

But while Columbus was thus ſucceſsfully eſtabliſhing the foundations of the Spaniſh grandeur in the New World, his enemies laboured with unwearied aſſiduity to deprive him of the glory and rewards to which his ſervices and ſufferings intitled him. The hardſhips unavoidable in a new ſettlement, the calamities occaſioned by an unhealthy climate, the diſaſters attending a voyage in unknown ſeas, were all repreſented as the fruits of his reſtleſs and inconſiderate ambition. His prudent attention to preſerve diſcipline and ſubordination was denominated exceſs of rigour; the puniſhments which he inflicted upon the mutinous and diſorderly were imputed to cruelty. Theſe accuſations gained ſuch credit in a jealous court, that a commiſſioner was appointed to repair to Hiſpaniola, and to inſpect into the conduct of Columbus. By the recommendation of his enemies, Aguado, a groom of the bed-chamber, was the perſon to whom this important truſt was committed. But in this choice they ſeem to have been more influenced by the obſequious attachment of the man to their intereſt, than by his capacity for the ſtation. Puffed up with ſuch ſudden elevation, Aguado diſplayed, in the exerciſe of this office, all the frivolous

* Herrera, dec. 1. lib. xi. c. 18. Life of Columbus, c. 61. Oviedo, lib. iii. p. 93. D. Benzon Hiſt. Novi Orbis, lib. i. c. 9. P. Martyr, dec. p. 48.

ſelf-

ſelf-importance, and acted with all the diguſting inſolence, which are natural to little minds, when raiſed to unexpected dignity, or employed in functions to which they are not equal. By liſtening with eagerneſs to every accuſation againſt Columbus, and encouraging not only the malcontent Spaniards, but even the Indians, to produce their grievances, real or imaginary, he fomented the ſpirit of diſſention in the iſland, without eſtabliſhing any regulations of public utility, or that tended to redreſs the many wrongs, with the odium of which he wiſhed to load the admiral's adminiſtration. As Columbus felt ſenſibly how humiliating his ſituation muſt be, if he ſhould remain in the country while ſuch a partial inſpector obſerved his motions, and controuled his juriſdiction, he took the reſolution of returning to Spain, in order to lay a full account of all his tranſactions, particularly with reſpect to the points in diſpute between him and his adverſaries, before Ferdinand and Iſabella, from whoſe juſtice and diſcernment he expected an equal and a favourable deciſion. He committed the adminiſtration of affairs, during his abſence, to Don Bartholomew, his brother, with the title of Adelantado, or Lieutenant-Governor. By a choice leſs fortunate, and which proved the ſource of many calamities to the colony, he appointed Francis Roldan chief juſtice, with very extenſive powers *.

1495.

1496.

In returning to Europe, Columbus held a courſe different from that which he had taken in his former voyage. He ſteered almoſt due eaſt from Hiſpaniola, in the parallel of twenty-two degrees of latitude; as experience had not yet diſcovered the more certain and expeditious method of ſtretching to the north, in order to fall in with the ſouth-weſt winds. By this ill adviſed choice, which, in the in-

Returns to Spain.

* Herrera, dec. 1. lib. ii. c. 18. Lib. iii. c. 1.

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1496.

fancy of navigation between the New and Old Worlds, can hardly be imputed to the admiral as a defect in naval ſkill, he was expoſed to infinite fatigue and danger, in a perpetual ſtruggle with the trade-winds, which blow without variation from the eaſt between the tropics. Notwithſtanding the almoſt inſuperable difficulties of ſuch a navigation, he perſiſted in his courſe with his uſual patience and firmneſs, but made ſo little way, that he was three months without ſeeing land. At length, his proviſions began to fail, the crew was reduced to the ſcanty allowance of ſix ounces of bread a-day for each perſon. The admiral fared no better than the meaneſt ſailor. But, even in this extreme diſtreſs, he retained the humanity which diſtinguiſhes his character, and refuſed to comply with the earneſt ſolicitations of his crew, ſome of whom propoſed to feed upon the Indian priſoners whom they were carrying over, and others inſiſted to throw them over-board, in order to leſſen the conſumption of their ſmall ſtock. He repreſented, that they were human beings, reduced by a common calamity to the ſame condition with themſelves, and intitled to ſhare an equal fate. His authority and remonſtrances diſſipated thoſe wild ideas ſuggeſted by deſpair. Nor had they time to recur, as he came ſoon within ſight of the coaſt of Spain, and all their fears and ſufferings ended *.

His reception there.

COLUMBUS appeared at court with the modeſt but determined confidence of a man conſcious not only of integrity, but of having performed great ſervices. Ferdinand and Iſabella, aſhamed of their own facility in lending too favourable an ear to frivolous or ill-founded accuſations, received him with

* Herrera, dec. 1. lib. iii. c. 1. Life of Columbus, c. 64.

ſuch

ſuch diſtinguiſhed marks of reſpect, as covered his enemies with ſhame. Their cenſures and calumnies were no more heard of at that juncture. The gold, the pearls, the cotton, and other commodities of value which Columbus produced, ſeemed fully to refute what the malcontents had propagated with reſpect to the poverty of the country. By reducing the Indians to obedience, and impoſing a regular tax upon them, he had ſecured to Spain a large acceſſion of new ſubjects, and the eſtabliſhment of a revenue that promiſed to be conſiderable. By the mines which he had found out and examined, a ſource of wealth ſtill more copious was opened. Great and unexpected as thoſe advantages were, Columbus repreſented them only as preludes to future acquiſitions, and as the earneſt of more important diſcoveries, which he ſtill meditated, and to which thoſe he had already made would conduct him with eaſe and certainty *.

A plan formed for the more regular eſtabliſhment of a colony.

THE attentive conſideration of all thoſe circumſtances made ſuch impreſſion, not only upon Iſabella, who was flattered with the idea of being the patroneſs of all Columbus's enterpriſes, but even upon Ferdinand, who having originally expreſſed his diſapprobation of his ſchemes, was ſtill more apt to doubt of their ſucceſs, that they reſolved to ſupply the colony in Hiſpaniola with every thing that could render it a permanent eſtabliſhment, and to furniſh Columbus with ſuch a fleet, that he might proceed to ſearch for thoſe new countries, of whoſe exiſtence he ſeemed to be confident. The meaſures moſt proper for accompliſhing both theſe deſigns were concerted with Columbus. Diſcovery had been the ſole object of the firſt voyage to the New World; and though, in the ſecond, ſettlement had

* Life of Columbus, c. 65. Herrera, dec. 1, lib. iii. c. 1.

been

BOOK II. 1496.

been propoſed, the precautions taken for that purpoſe had either been inſufficient, or were rendered ineffectual by the mutinous ſpirit of the Spaniards, and the unforeſeen calamities ariſing from various cauſes. Now a plan was to be formed of a regular colony, that might ſerve as a model in all future eſtabliſhments. Every particular was conſidered with attention, and arranged with a ſcrupulous accuracy. The preciſe number of adventurers who ſhould be permitted to embark was fixed. They were to be of different ranks and profeſſions; and the proportion of each was eſtabliſhed, according to their uſefulneſs and the wants of the colony. A ſuitable number of women was to be choſen to accompany theſe new ſettlers. As it was the firſt object to raiſe proviſions in a country where ſcarcity of food had been the occaſion of ſo much diſtreſs, a conſiderable body of huſbandmen was to be carried over. As the Spaniards had then no conception of deriving any benefit from thoſe productions of the New World which have ſince yielded ſuch large returns of wealth to Europe, but had formed magnificent ideas, and entertained ſanguine hopes with reſpect to the riches contained in the mines which had been diſcovered, a band of workmen, ſkilled in the various arts employed in digging and refining the precious metals, was provided. All theſe emigrants were to receive pay and ſubſiſtence for ſome years, at the public expence *.

A defect in it.

THUS far the regulations were prudent and well adapted to the end in view. But as it was foreſeen that few would engage voluntarily to ſettle in a country, whoſe noxious climate had been fatal to ſo many of their countrymen, Columbus propoſed to tranſport to Hiſpaniola ſuch malefactors as had been

* Herrera dec. 1. lib. iii. c. 2.

convicted

convicted of crimes, which, though capital, were of a less atrocious nature; and that for the future a certain proportion of the offenders usually sent to the gallies, should be condemned to labour in the mines which were to be opened. This advice, given without due reflection, was inconsiderately adopted. The prisons of Spain were drained, in order to collect members for the intended colony; and the judges were instructed to recruit it by their future sentences. It is not, however, with such materials, that the foundations of a society, destined to be permanent, should be laid. Industry, sobriety, patience, and mutual confidence are indispensably requisite in an infant settlement, where purity of morals must contribute more towards establishing order than the operation or authority of laws. But when such a mixture of what is corrupt is admitted into the original constitution of the political body, the vices of those unsound and incurable members will probably infect the whole, and must certainly be productive of violent and unhappy effects. This the Spaniards fatally experienced; and the other European nations having successively imitated their practice in this particular, pernicious consequences have followed in their settlements, which can be imputed to no other cause*.

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Though Columbus obtained, with great facility and dispatch, the royal approbation of every measure and regulation that he proposed, his endeavours to carry them into execution were so long retarded, as must have tired out the patience of any man, less accustomed to encounter difficulties and to surmount them. Those delays were occasioned partly by that tedious formality and spirit of procrastination, with which the Spaniards conduct

Executed slowly.

* Herrera, dec. 1. liq. iii. c. 2. Touran Hist. Gener. de l'Amerique, i. p. 51.

business;

BOOK II.

1496. buſineſs; and partly by the exhauſted ſtate of the treaſury, which was drained by the expence of celebrating the marriage of Ferdinand and Iſabella's only ſon with Margaret of Auſtria, and that of Joanna, their ſecond daughter, with Philip archduke of Auſtria *: but muſt be chiefly imputed to the malicious arts of Columbus's enemies. Aſtoniſhed at the reception which he met with upon his return, and overawed by his preſence, they gave way, for ſome time, to a tide of favour too ſtrong for them to oppoſe. Their enmity, however, was too inveterate to remain long inactive. They reſumed their operations, and by the aſſiſtance of Fonſeca, the miniſter for Indian affairs, who was now promoted to the biſhopric of Badajos, they threw in ſo many obſtacles to protract the preparations for Columbus's expedition, that a year elapſed before he † could procure two ſhips to carry over a part of the ſupplies deſtined for the colony, and almoſt two years were ſpent before the ſmall ſquadron was equipped of which he himſelf was to take the command ‡,

1498. Third voyage of Columbus. THIS ſquadron conſiſted of ſix ſhips only, of no great burden, and but indifferently provided for a long or dangerous navigation. The voyage which he now meditated was in a courſe different from any he had undertaken. As he was fully perſuaded that the fertile regions of India lay to the ſouth-weſt of thoſe countries which he had diſcovered, he propoſed, as the moſt certain method of finding out theſe, to ſtand directly ſouth from the Canary or Cape de Verd Iſlands, until he came under the equinoctinal line, and then to ſtretch to the weſt before the favourable wind for ſuch a courſe, which blows invariably between the tropics. With this idea he ſet ſail, and

May 30.

* P. Martyr. epiſt. 161. † Life of Columbus, c. 65.
§ Herrera, dec. 1. lib. iii. c. 9.

touched

touched firſt at the Canary, and then at the Cape de Verd iſlands. From the former he diſpatched three of his ſhips with a ſupply of proviſions for the colony in Hiſpaniola: with the other three, he continued his voyage towards the ſouth. No remarkable occurrence happened until they arrived within five degrees of the line. There they were becalmed, and at the ſame time the heat waxed ſo exceſſive, that many of their wine caſks burſt, the liquor in others ſoured, and their proviſions corrupted *. The Spaniards, who had never ventured ſo far to the ſouth, were afraid that the ſhips would take fire, and began to apprehend the reality of what the ancients had taught concerning the deſtructive qualities of that torrid region of the globe. They were relieved, in ſome meaſure, from their fears by a ſeaſonable fall of rain. This, however, though ſo heavy and unintermitting that the men could hardly keep the deck, did not greatly mitigate the intenſeneſs of the heat. The admiral, who with his uſual vigilance had directed every operation in perſon, from the beginning of the voyage, was ſo much exhauſted by fatigue and want of ſleep, that it brought on a violent fit of the gout, accompanied with a fever. All theſe circumſtances conſtrained him to yield to the importunities of his crew, and to altar his courſe to the north weſt, in order to reach ſome of the Carribee iſlands, where he might refit, and be ſupplied with proviſions.

1498. July 4.

July 19.

Diſcovers the continent of America.

On the firſt of Auguſt, the man ſtationed in the round top ſurpriſed them with the joyful cry of *land*. They ſtood towards it, and diſcovered a conſiderable iſland, which the admiral called Trinidad, a name it ſtill retains. It lies on the coaſt

* P. Martyr, dec. p. 70.

of

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of Guiana, near the mouth of the Orinoco. This, though a river only of the third or fourth magnitude in the New world, far ſurpaſſes any of the ſtreams that water our hemiſphere. It rolls towards the ocean ſuch a vaſt body of water, and ruſhes into it with ſuch impetuous force, that when it meets the tide, which on that coaſt riſes to an uncommon height, their colliſion occaſions a ſwell and agitation of the waves no leſs ſurpriſing than formidable. In this conflict, the irreſiſtible torrent of the river ſo far prevails, that it freſhens the ocean many leagues with its flood *. Columbus, before he could perceive the danger, was entangled among thoſe adverſe currents and tempeſtuous waves, and it was with the utmoſt difficulty that he eſcaped through a narrow ſtrait, which appeared ſo tremendous, that he called it La Boca del Drago. As ſoon as the conſternation which this occaſioned permitted him to reflect upon the nature of an appearance ſo extraordinary, he diſcerned in it a ſource of comfort and hope. He juſtly concluded, that ſuch a vaſt body of water as this river contained, could not be ſupplied by any iſland, but muſt flow through a country of immenſe extent, and of conſequence, that he was now arrived at that continent which it had long been the object of his wiſhes to diſcover. Full of this idea, he ſtood to the weſt along the coaſt of thoſe provinces which are now known by the names of Paria and Cumana. He landed in ſeveral places, and had ſome intercourſe with the people, who reſembled thoſe of Hiſpaniola in their appearance and manner of life. They wore, as ornaments, ſmall plates of gold, and pearls of conſiderable value, which they willingly exchanged for European toys. They ſeemed to poſſeſs a bet-

* Gumilla Hiſt. de l'Orenoque, tom. i. p. 14.

ter

ter underſtanding, and greater courage, than the inhabitants of the iſlands. The country produced four-footed animals of ſeveral kinds, as well as a great variety of fowls and fruits *. The admiral was ſo much delighted with its beauty and fertility, that with the warm enthuſiaſm of a diſcoverer, he imagined it to be the paradiſe deſcribed in Scripture, which the Almighty choſe for the reſidence of man, while he retained innocence that rendered him worthy of ſuch a habitation ||. Thus Columbus had the glory not only of diſcovering to mankind the exiſtence of a New World, but made conſiderable progreſs towards a perfect knowledge of it; and was the firſt man who conducted the Spaniards to that vaſt continent which has been the chief ſeat of their empire, and the ſource of their treaſures in this quarter of the globe. The ſhattered condition of his ſhips, ſcarcity of proviſions, his own infirmities, together with the impatience of his crew, prevented him from purſuing his diſcoveries any farther, and made it neceſſary to bear away for Hiſpaniola. In his way thither he diſcovered the iſlands of Cubagua and Margarita, which afterwards became remarkable for their pearl-fiſhery. When he arrived at Hiſpaniola, he was waſted to an extreme degree with fatigue and ſickneſs; but found the affairs of the colony in ſuch a ſituation, as afforded him no proſpect of enjoying that repoſe of which he ſtood ſo much in need.

1498.

Aug. 30.

MANY revolutions had happened in that country during his abſence. His brother, the Adelantado, in conſequence of an advice which the admiral gave before his departure, had removed the colony from Iſabella to a more commodious ſtation, ou the oppoſite ſide of the iſland, and laid the foun-

State of Hiſpaniola on his arrival there.

* Herrera, dec. 1. lib, iii. c. 9, 10, 11. Life of Columbus, c. 66---73.

|| Herrera, dec. 1. lib. iii. c. 12. Gomera c. 84. See NOTE XXI.

dation

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dation of St. Domingo *, which was long the moſt conſiderable European town in the New world, and the ſeat of the ſupreme courts in the Spaniſh dominions there. As ſoon as the Spaniards were eſtabliſhed in this new ſettlement, the adelantado, that they might neither languiſh in inactivity, nor have leiſure to form new cabals, marched into thoſe parts of the iſland which his brother had not yet viſited or reduced to obedience. As the people were unable to reſiſt, they ſubmitted every where to the tribute which he impoſed. But they ſoon found the burden to be ſo intolerable, that, overawed as they were by the ſuperior power of their oppreſſors, they took arms againſt them. Thoſe inſurrections, however, were not formidable. A conflict with timid and naked Indians was neither dangerous nor of doubtful iſſue.

Mutiny of Roldan.

BUT while the adelantado was employed againſt them in the field, a mutiny, of an aſpect far more alarming, broke out among the Spaniards. The ringleader of it was Francis Roldan, whom Columbus had placed in a ſtation which required him to be the guardian of order and tranquility in the colony. A turbulent and inconſiderate ambition precipitated him into this deſperate meaſure, ſo unbecoming his rank. The arguments which he employed to ſeduce his countrymen were frivolous and ill-founded. He accuſed Columbus and his two brothers of arrogance and ſeverity; he pretended that they aimed at eſtabliſhing an independent dominion in the country; he taxed them with an intention of cutting off part of the Spaniards by hunger and fatigue, that they might more eaſily reduce the remainder to ſubjection; he repreſented it as unworthy of Caſtilians, to remain the

* P. Martyr. dec. p. 56.

tame

tame and paſſive ſlaves of three Genoeſe adventurers. As men have always a propenſity to impute the hardſhips of which they feel the preſſure, to the miſconduct of their rulers; as every nation views with a jealous eye the power and exaltation of foreigners, Roldan's inſinuations made a deep impreſſion on his countrymen. His character and rank added weight to them. A conſiderable number of the Spaniards made choice of him as their leader, and taking arms againſt the adelantado and his brother, ſeized the king's magazine of proviſions, and endeavoured to ſurpriſe the fort at St. Domingo. This was preſerved by the vigilance and courage of Don Diego Columbus. The mutineers were obliged to retire to the province of Xaragua, where they continued not only to diſclaim the adelantado's authority themſelves but excited the Indians to throw off the yoke *.

1498.

SUCH was the diſtracted ſtate of the colony when Columbus landed at St. Domingo. He was aſtoniſhed to find that the three ſhips which he had diſpatched from the Canaries were not yet arrived. By the unſkilfulneſs of the pilots, and the violence of currents, they had been carried a hundred and ſixty miles to the weſt of St. Domingo, and forced to take ſhelter in a harbour of the province of Xaragua, where Roldan and his ſeditious followers were cantoned. Roldan carefully concealed from the commanders his inſurrection againſt the adelantado, and employing his utmoſt addreſs to gain their confidence, perſuaded them to ſet on ſhore a conſiderable part of the new ſettlers whom they brought over, that they might proceed by land to St. Domingo. It required but few arguments to prevail

* Herrera, dec. 1. lib. iii. c. 5.---8. Life of Columbus, c. 74---77. Gomara, c. 25. P. Martyr, p. 78.

with

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with thoſe men to eſpouſe his cauſe. They were the refuſe of the jails of Spain, to whom idleneſs, licentiouſneſs, and deeds of violence were familiar; and they returned eagerly to a courſe of life nearly reſembling that to which they had been accuſtomed. The commanders of the ſhips perceiving, when it was too late, their imprudence in diſembarking ſo many of their men, ſtood away for St. Domingo, and got ſafe into the port a few days after the admiral; but their ſtock of proviſions was ſo waſted during a voyage of ſuch long continuance, that they brought little relief to the colony *.

Compoſed by the prudent conduct of Columbus.

By this junction with a band of ſuch bold and deſperate aſſociates, Roldan became extremely formidable, and no leſs extravagant in his demands. Columbus, though filled with reſentment at his ingratitude, and highly exaſperated by the inſolence of his followers, made no haſte to take the field. He trembled at the thoughts of kindling the flames of a civil war, in which, whatever party prevailed, the power and ſtrength of both muſt be ſo much waſted, as might encourage the common enemy to unite and complete their deſtruction. At the ſame time he obſerved, that the prejudices and paſſions which incited the rebels to take arms, had ſo far infected thoſe who ſtill adhered to him, that many of them were adverſe, and all cold to the ſervice. From ſuch ſentiments, with reſpect to the public intereſt, as well as from the view of his own ſituation, he choſe to negociate rather than to fight. By a ſeaſonable proclamation, offering free pardon to ſuch as ſhould merit it by returning to their duty, he made impreſſion upon ſome of the malcontents.

* Herrera, dec. 1. lib. iii. c. 12. Life of Columbus, c. 78, 79.

By

By engaging to grant ſuch as ſhould deſire it, the liberty of returning to Spain, he allured all thoſe unfortunate adventurers, who, from ſickneſs and diſappointment, were diſguſted with the country. By promiſing to re-eſtabliſh Roldan in his former office, he ſoothed his pride; and by complying with moſt of his demands in behalf of his followers, he ſatisfied their avarice. Thus, gradually and without bloodſhed, but after many tedious negociations, he diſſolved this dangerous combination which threatened the colony with ruin; and reſtored the appearance of order, regular government and tranquility *. 1498.

A new mode of ſettlement eſtabliſhed.

In conſequence of this agreement with the mutineers, lands were allotted them in different parts of the iſland, and the Indians ſettled in each diſtrict were appointed to cultivate a certain portion of ground for the uſe of thoſe new maſters. The performance of this work was ſubſtituted in place of the tribute formerly impoſed; and how neceſſary ſoever ſuch a regulation might be in a ſickly and feeble colony, it introduced among the Spaniards the *Repartimientos*, or diſtributions of Indians eſtabliſhed by them in all their ſettlements, which brought numberleſs calamities upon that unhappy people, and ſubjected them to the moſt grievous oppreſſion †. This was not the only bad effect of the inſurrection in Hiſpaniola; it prevented Columbus from proſecuting his diſcoveries on the continent, as ſelf-preſervation obliged him to keep near his perſon his brother the adelantado, and the ſailors whom he intended to have employed in that ſervice. As ſoon as his affairs would permit, he ſent ſome of his ſhips to Spain with a journal of the 1499.

* Herrera dec 1. lib. iii. c. 13, 14. Life of Columbus, c. 80, &c.

† Herrera, dec 1. lib. iii. c. 14, &c.

voyage

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voyage which he had made, a deſcription of the new countries which he had diſcovered, a chart of the coaſt along which he had ſailed, and ſpecimens of the gold, the pearls, and other curious or valuable productions which he had acquired by trafficking with the natives. At the ſame time he tranſmitted an account of the inſurrection in Hiſpaniola; he accuſed the mutineers not only of having thrown the colony into ſuch violent convulſions as threatened its diſſolution, but of having obſtructed every attempt towards diſcovery and improvement, by their unprovoked rebellion againſt their ſuperiors, and propoſed ſeveral regulations for the better government of the iſland, as well as the extinction of that mutinous ſpirit, which though ſuppreſſed at preſent, might ſoon burſt out with additional rage. Roldan and his aſſociates did not neglect to convey to Spain, by the ſame ſhips, an apology for their own conduct, together with their recriminations upon the admiral and his brothers. Unfortunately for the honour of Spain, and the happineſs of Columbus, the latter gained moſt credit in the court of Ferdinand and Iſabella, and produced unexpected effects *.

The voyage of Vaſco de Gama to the Eaſt Indies, by the Cape of Good Hope.

BUT, previous to theſe, events had happened which merit attention, both on account of their own importance, and their connection with the hiſtory of the New World. While Columbus was engaged in his ſucceſſive voyages to the weſt, the ſpirit of diſcovery did not languiſh in Portugal, the kingdom where it firſt acquired vigour, and became enterpriſing. Self-condemnation and regret were not the only ſentiments to which the ſucceſs of Columbus, and reflection upon their own impru-

* Herrera, dec. 1. lib, iii. c. 14. Benzon, Hiſt Nov. Orb. lib. i. c. 2.

dence

dence in rejecting his propoſals, gave riſe among the Portugueſe. They excited a generous emulation to ſurpaſs his performances, and an ardent deſire to make ſome reparation to their country for their own error. With this view, Emmanuel, who inherited the enterpriſing genius of his predeceſſors, perſiſted in their grand ſcheme of opening a paſſage to the Eaſt Indies by the Cape of Good Hope; and ſoon after his acceſſion to the throne, equipped a ſquadron for that important voyage. He gave the command of it to Vaſco de Gama, a man of noble birth, poſſeſſed of virtue, prudence, and courage, equal to the ſtation. The ſquadron, like all thoſe fitted out for diſcovery in the infancy of navigation, was extremely feeble, conſiſting only of three veſſels, of neither burden nor force adequate to the ſervice. As the Europeans were at that time altogether unacquainted with the courſe of the trade-winds and periodical monſoons, which render navigation in the Atlantic ocean, as well as in the ſea that ſeparates Africa from India, at ſome ſeaſons eaſy, and at others not only dangerous, but almoſt impracticable, the time choſen for Gama's departure was the moſt improper during the whole year. He ſet ſail from Liſbon on the ninth of July, and ſtanding towards the ſouth, had to ſtruggle for four months with contrary winds, before he could reach the Cape of Good Hope. Here their violence began to abate; and during an interval of calm weather, Gama doubled that formidable promontory, which had ſo long been the boundary of navigation, and directed his courſe towards the north-eaſt, along the African coaſt. He touched at ſeveral ports; and after various adventures, which the Portugueſe hiſtorians relate with high but juſt encomiums upon his conduct and intrepidity, he came to anchor before the city of Melinda. Throughout all the vaſt countries which extend

1499.

1497.

Nov. 20.

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along the coaſt of Africa, from the river Senegal to the confines of Zanguebar, the Portugueſe had found a race of men rude and uncultivated, ſtrangers to letters, to arts and commerce, and differing from the inhabitants of Europe no leſs in their features and complexion, than in their manners and inſtitutions. As they advanced from this, they obſerved, to their inexpreſſible joy, that the human form gradually altered and improved, the Aſiatic features began to predominate, marks of civilization appeared, letters were known, the Mahometan religion was eſtabliſhed, and a commerce, far from being inconſiderable, was carried on. At that time ſeveral veſſels from India were in the port of Melinda. Gama now purſued his voyage with almoſt abſolute certainty of ſucceſs, and under the conduct of a Mahometan pilot, arrived at Calecut, upon the coaſt of Malabar, on the twenty-ſecond of May one thouſand four hundred and ninety-eight. What he beheld of the wealth, the populouſneſs, the cultivation, the induſtry and arts of this highly civilized country, far ſurpaſſed any idea that he had formed, from the imperfect accounts which the Europeans had hitherto received of it. But as he poſſeſſed neither ſufficient forces to attempt a ſettlement, nor proper commodities with which he could carry on commerce of any conſequence, he haſtened back to Portugal, with an account of his ſucceſs in performing a voyage the longeſt, as well as moſt difficult, that had ever been made ſince the firſt invention of navigation. He landed at Liſbon on the fourteenth of September one thouſand four hundred and ninety-nine, two years, two months, and five days, from the time he left that port *.

THUS, during the courſe of the fifteenth century, mankind made greater progreſs in exploring

* Ramuſio, vol. i. 119. D.

the

the ſtate of the habitable globe, than in all the ages which had elapſed previous to that period. The ſpirit of diſcovery, feeble at firſt and cautious, moved within a very narrow ſphere, and made its efforts with heſitation and timidity. Encouraged by ſucceſs, it became adventurous, and boldly extended its operatiens, in the courſe of its progreſſion, it continued to acquire vigour, and advanced at length with a rapidity and force which burſt through all the limits within which ignorance and fear had hitherto circumſcribed the activity of the human race. Almoſt fifty years were employed by the Portugueſe in creeping along the coaſt of Africa from Cape Non to Cape de Verd, the latter of which lies only twelve degrees to the ſouth of the former. In leſs than thirty years, they ventured beyond the equinoctial line into another hemiſphere, and penetrated to the ſouthern extremity of Africa, at the diſtance of forty-nine degrees from Cape de Verd. During the laſt ſeven years, a New world was diſcovered in the weſt, not inferior in extent to all the parts of the earth with which mankind were at that time acquainted. In the eaſt, unknown ſeas and countries were found out, and a communication, long deſired, but hitherto concealed, was opened between Europe and the opulent regions of India. In compariſon with events ſo wonderful and unexpected, all that had hitherto been deemed great or ſplendid, faded away and diſappeared. Vaſt objects now preſented themſelves. The human mind, rouzed and intereſted by the proſpect, engaged with ardour in purſuit of them, and exerted its active powers in a new direction.

1499.

Diſcoveries carried on in Spain by private adventurers.

THIS ſpirit of enterpriſe, though but newly awakened in Spain, began ſoon to operate extenſively. All the attempts towards diſcovery made in that kingdom, had hitherto been carried on by

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Columbus alone, and at the expence of the ſovereign. But now private adventurers, allured by the magnificent deſcriptions he gave of the regions which he had viſited, as well as by the ſpecimens of their wealth which he produced, offered to fit out ſquadrons at their own riſk, and to go in queſt of new countries. The Spaniſh court, whoſe ſcanty revenues were exhauſted by the charge of its expeditions to the New world, which, though they opened vaſt proſpects of future benefit, yielded a very ſparing return of preſent profit, was extremely willing to devolve the burden of diſcovery upon its ſubjects. It ſeized with joy an opportunity of rendering the avarice, the ingenuity, and efforts of projectors, inſtrumental in promoting deſigns of certain advantage to the public, though of doubtful ſucceſs with reſpect to themſelves. One of the firſt propoſitions of this kind was made by Alonſo de Ojeda, a gallant and active officer, who had accompanied Columbus in his ſecond voyage. His rank and character procured him ſuch credit with the merchants of Seville, that they undertook to equip four ſhips, provided he could obtain the royal licence, authoriſing the voyage. The powerful patronage of the biſhop of Badajos, eaſily ſecured ſucceſs in a ſuit ſo agreeable to the court. Without conſulting Columbus, or regarding the rights and juriſdiction which he had acquired by the capitulation in one thouſand four hundred and ninety-two, Ojeda was permitted to ſet out for the New world. In order to direct his courſe, the biſhop communicated to him the admiral's journal of his laſt voyage, and his charts of the countries which he had diſcovered. Ojeda ſtruck out into no new path of navigation, but adhering ſervilely to the route which Columbus had taken, arrived on the coaſt of Paria. He traded with the natives, and ſtanding to the weſt, proceeded as far as Cape de Vela, and ranged

Ojeda the firſt of theſe.

May.

ranged along a conſiderable extent of coaſt beyond that on which Columbus had touched. Having thus aſcertained the opinion of Columbus, that this country was a part of the continent, Ojeda returned by way of Hiſpaniola to Spain, with ſome reputation as a diſcoverer, but with little benefit to thoſe who had raiſed the funds for the expedition *. 1499.

Is accompanied by Amerigo Veſpucci.

AMERIGO VESPUCCI, a Florentine gentleman, accompanied Ojeda in this voyage. In what ſtation he ſerved, is uncertain; but as he was an experienced ſailor, and eminently ſkilful in all the ſciences ſubſervient to navigation, he ſeems to have acquired ſuch authority among his companions, that they willingly allowed him to have a chief ſhare in directing their operations during the voyage. Soon after his return, he tranſmitted an account of his adventures and diſcoveries to one of his countrymen; and labouring with the vanity of a traveller to magnify his own exploits, he had the addreſs and confidence to frame his narrative, ſo as to make it appear that he had the glory of having firſt diſcovered the continent in the New World. Amerigo's account was drawn up, not only with art, but with ſome elegance. It contained an amuſing hiſtory of his voyage, and judicious obſervations upon the natural productions, the inhabitants, and the cuſtoms of the countries which he had viſited. As it was the firſt deſcription of any part of the New World that was publiſhed, a performance ſo well calculated to gratify the paſſion of mankind for what is new and marvellous, circulated rapidly, and was read with admiration. The country of which Amerigo was ſuppoſed to be the diſcoverer, came gradually to be called by his name. The caprice of mankind, often as unaccountable as unjuſt, has

From whom the name of America is given to the New World.

* Herrera, dec. 1. lib. iv. c. 1, 2, 3.

perpetuated

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1499. perpetuated this error. By the univerſal conſent of nations, AMERICA is the name beſtowed on this new quarter of the globe. The bold pretenſions of a fortunate impoſtor have robbed the diſcoverer of the New World of a diſtinction which belonged to him. The name of Amerigo has ſupplanted that of Columbus; and mankind may tegret an act of injuſtice, which, having received the ſanction of time, it is now too late to redreſs *.

Voyage of Alonſo Nigro.

DURING the ſame year, another voyage of diſcovery was undertaken. Columbus not only introduced the ſpirit of naval enterpriſe into Spain, but all the firſt adventurers who diſtinguiſhed themſelves in this new career, were formed by his inſtructions, and acquired in his voyages the ſkill and information which qualified them to imitate his example. Alonſo Nigno, who had ſerved under the admiral in his laſt expedition, fitted out, in conjunction with Chriſtopher Guerra, a merchant of Seville, a ſingle ſhip, and ſailed to the coaſt of Paria. This voyage ſeems to have been conducted with greater attention to private emolument, than to any general or national object. Nigno and Guerra made no diſcoveries of any importance; but they brought home ſuch a return of gold and pearls, as inflamed their countrymen with the deſire of engaging in ſimilar adventures †.

January 13, Of Vincent Yanez Pinzon.

SOON after Vincent Yanez Pinzon, one of the admiral's companions in his firſt voyage, ſailed ſtom Palos with four ſhips. He ſtood boldly towards the ſouth, and was the firſt Spaniard who ventured to croſs the equinoctial line; but he ſeems to have landed on no part of the coaſt beyond the mouth

* See NOTE XXII.

† P. Martyr, dec. p. 87. Herrrera, dec. 1. lib. iv. c. 5.

of

of the Maragnon, or river of the Amazons. All theſe navigators adopted the erroneous theory of Columbus, and believed that the countries which they had diſcovered, were part of the vaſt continent of India *. 1500.

The Portugueſe diſcover Braſil.

During this firſt year of the ſixteenth century, that fertile diſtrict of America, on the confines of which Pinzon had ſtopt ſhort, was more fully diſcovered. The ſucceſsful voyage of Gama to the Eaſt Indies, having encouraged the king of Portugal to fit out a fleet ſo powerful, as not only to carry on trade, but to attempt conqueſt, he gave the command of it to Pedro Alvarez Cabral. In order to avoid the coaſt of Africa, where he was certain of meeting with variable breezes, or frequent calms, to retard his voyage, Cabral ſtood out to ſea, and kept ſo far to the weſt, that, to his ſurpriſe, he found himſelf upon the ſhore of an unknown country, in the tenth degree beyond the line. He imagined, at firſt, that it was ſome iſland in the Atlantic ocean hitherto unobſerved; but, proceeding along its coaſt for ſeveral days, he was led gradually to believe, that a country ſo extenſive formed a part of ſome great continent. This latter opinion was well founded. The country with which he fell in belongs to that province in South America, now known by the name of Braſil. He landed; and having formed a very high idea of the fertility of the ſoil, and agreeableneſs of the climate, he took poſſeſſion of it for the crown of Portugal, and diſpatched a ſhip to Liſbon with an account of this event, which appeared to be no leſs important than it was unexpected †. Columbus's diſcovery of the New World was the effort of an active genius, enlightened by ſcience, guided by

* Herrera, dec. 1. lib. iv. c. 6. P. Martyr, dec. p. 95.
† Herrera, dec. 1. lib. iv. c. 7.

experience,

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1500.

experience, and acting upon a regular plan, executed with no less courage than perseverance. But from this adventure of the Portuguese, it appears that chance might have accomplished that great design, which it is now the pride of human reason to have formed and perfected. If the sagacity of Columbus had not conducted mankind to America, Cabral, by a fortunate accident, might have led them, a few years later, to the knowledge of that extensive continent *.

Machinations against Columbus.

While the Spaniards and Portuguese, by those successive voyages, were daily acquiring more enlarged ideas of the extent and opulence of that quarter of the globe which Columbus had made known to them, he himself, far from enjoying the tranquillity and honours with which his services should have been recompensed, was struggling with every distress in which the envy and malevolence of the people under his command, or the ingratitude of the court which he served, could involve him. Though the pacification with Roldan broke the union, and weakened the force of the mutineers, it did not extirpate the seeds of discord out of the island. Several of the malcontents continued in arms, refusing to submit to the admiral. He and his brothers were obliged to take the field alternately, in order to check their incursions, or to punish their crimes. The perpetual occupation and disquiet which this created, prevented him from giving due attention to the dangerous machinations of his enemies in the court of Spain. A good number of those who were most dissatisfied with his administration, had embraced the opportunity of returning to Europe with the ships which he dispatched from St. Domingo. The final disappointment of all their hopes inflamed the rage of these unfortunate

* Herrera, dec. 1. lib. vii. c. 5.

adventurers

adventurers againſt Columbus to the utmoſt pitch. Their poverty and diſtreſs, by exciting compaſſion, rendered their accuſations credible, and their complaints intereſting. They teazed Ferdinand and Iſabella inceſſantly with memorials, containing the detail of their own grievances, and the articles of their charge againſt Columbus. Whenever either the king or queen appeared in public, they ſurrounded them in a tumultuary manner, inſiſting with importunate clamours for payment of the arrears due to them, and demanding vengeance upon the author of their ſufferings. They inſulted the admiral's ſons wherever they met them, reproaching them as the offspring of the projector, whoſe fatal curioſity had diſcovered thoſe pernicious regions which drained Spain of its wealth, and would prove the grave of its people. Thoſe avowed endeavours of the malcontents from America to ruin Columbus were ſeconded by the ſecret, but more dangerous inſinuations of that party among the courtiers, who had always thwarted his ſchemes, and envied his ſucceſs and credit *.

1500.

Their influence on Ferdinand and Iſabella.

FERDINAND was diſpoſed to liſten, not only with a willing, but with a partial ear, to theſe accuſations. Notwithſtanding the flattering accounts which Columbus had given of the riches of America, the remittances from it had hitherto been ſo ſcanty, that they fell far ſhort of defraying the expence of the armaments fitted out. The glory of the diſcovery, together with the proſpect of remote commercial advantages, was all that Spain had yet received in return for the efforts which ſhe had made. But time had already diminiſhed the firſt ſenſations of joy which the diſcovery of a New World occaſioned, and fame alone was not an object to ſatisfy the cold intereſted mind of Ferdinand.

* Life of Columbus, c. 85.

The

BOOK II. 1500.

The nature of commerce was then ſo little underſtood, that, where immediate gain was not acquired, the hope of diſtant benefit, or of ſlow and moderate returns, was totally diſregarded. Ferdinand conſidered Spain, on this account, as a loſer by the enterpriſe of Columbus, and imputed it to his miſconduct and incapacity for government, that a country abounding in gold had yielded nothing of value to its conquerors. Even Iſabella, who, from the favourable opinion which ſhe entertained of Columbus, had uniformly protected him, was ſhaken at length by the number and boldneſs of his accuſers, and began to ſuſpect that a diſaffection ſo general muſt have been occaſioned by real grievances, which called for redreſs. The biſhop of Badajos, with his uſual animoſity againſt Columbus, encouraged theſe ſuſpicions, and confirmed them.

Fatal effects of this.

As ſoon as the queen began to give way to the torrent of calumny, a reſolution fatal to Columbus was taken. Francis de Bovadilla, a knight of Calatrava, was appointed to repair to Hiſpaniola, with full powers to inquire into the conduct of Columbus, and, if he found the charge of mal-adminiſtration proved, to ſuperſede him, and aſſume the government of the iſland. It was impoſſible to eſcape condemnation, when this prepoſterous commiſſion made it the intereſt of the judge to find the perſon whom he was ſent to try, guilty. Though Columbus had now compoſed all the diſſentions in the iſland; though he had brought both Spaniards and Indians to ſubmit peaceably to his government; though he had made ſuch effectual proviſion for working the mines, and cultivating the country, as would have ſecured a conſiderable revenue to the king, as well as large profits to individuals, Bovadilla, without deigning to attend

to

to the nature or merit of thoſe ſervices, diſcovered, from the moment that he landed in Hiſpaniola, a determined purpoſe of treating him as a criminal. He took poſſeſſion of the admiral's houſe in St. Domingo, from which he happened at that time to be abſent, and ſeized his effects, as if he had been already convicted; he rendered himſelf maſter of the fort and of the king's ſtores by violence; he required all perſons to acknowledge him as ſupreme governor; he ſet at liberty the priſoners confined by the admiral, and ſummoned him to appear before his tribunal, in order to anſwer for his conduct; tranſmitting to him, together with the ſummons, a copy of the royal mandate, by which Columbus was enjoined to yield implicit obedience to his commands. 1500.

Columbus ſent in chains to Spain.

COLUMBUS, though deeply affected with the ingratitude and injuſtice of Ferdinand and Iſabella, did not heſitate a moment about his own conduct. He ſubmitted to the will of his ſovereigns with a reſpectful ſilence, and repaired directly to the court of that violent and partial judge whom they had authoriſed to try him. Bovadilla, without admitting him into his preſence, ordered him inſtantly to be arreſted, to be loaded with chains, and hurried on board a ſhip. Even under this humiliating reverſe of fortune, the firmneſs of mind which diſtinguiſhes the character of Columbus, did not forſake him. Conſcious of his own integrity, and ſolacing himſelf with reflecting upon the great things which he had atchieved, he endured this inſult offered to his character, not only with compoſure, but with dignity. Nor had he the conſolation of ſympathy to mitigate his ſufferings. Bovadilla had already rendered himſelf ſo extremely popular, by granting various immunities to the colony, by liberal donations of Indians to all who applied for them, and by

October.

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by relaxing the reins of diſcipline and government, that the Spaniards, who were moſtly adventurers, whom their indigence or crimes had impelled to abandon their native country, expreſſed the moſt indecent ſatisfaction with the diſgrace and impriſonment of Columbus. They flattered themſelves, that now they ſhould enjoy an uncontrouled liberty, more ſuitable to their diſpoſition and former habits of life. Among perſons thus prepared to cenſure the proceedings, and to aſperſe the character of Columbus, Bovadilla collected materials for a charge againſt him. All accuſations, the moſt improbable as well as inconſiſtent, were received. No informer, however infamouis was rejected. The reſult of this inqueſt, no leſs indecent than partial, he tranſmitted to Spain. At the ſame time, he ordered Columbus, with his two brothers, to be carried thither in fetters; and, adding cruelty to inſult, he confined them in different ſhips, and excluded them from the comfort of that friendly intercourſe which might have ſoothed their common diſtreſs. But while the Spaniards in Hiſpaniola viewed the arbitrary and inſolent proceedings of Bovadilla with a general approbation, which reflects diſhonour upon their name and country, one man ſtill retained the memory of the great actions which Columbus had performed, and was touched with the ſentiments of veneration and pity due to his rank, his age and his merit. Alonſo de Vallejo, the captain of the veſſel on board which the admiral was confined, as ſoon as he was clear of the iſland, approached his priſoner with great reſpect, and offered to releaſe him from the fetters with which he was unjuſtly loaded. "No," replied Columbus, with a generous indignation, "I wear theſe irons in conſequence of an order from my ſovereigns. They ſhall find me as obedient to this as to their other injunctions. By their command

mand I have been confined, and their command alone ſhall ſet me at liberty *."

FORTUNATELY, the voyage to Spain was extremely ſhort. As ſoon as Ferdinand and Iſabella were informed that Columbus was brought home a priſoner, and in chains, they perceived at once what univerſal aſtoniſhment this event muſt occaſion, and what an impreſſion to their diſadvantage it muſt make. All Europe, they foreſaw, would be filled with indignation at this ungenerous requital of a man who had performed actions worthy of the higheſt recompence, and would exclaim againſt the injuſtice of the nation, to which he had been ſuch an eminent benefactor, as well as againſt the ingratitude of the princes whoſe reign he had rendered illuſtrious. Aſhamed of their own conduct, and eager not only to make ſome reparation for this injury, but to efface the ſtain which it might fix upon their character, they inſtantly iſſued orders to ſet Columbus at liberty, invited him to court, and remitted money to enable him to appear there in a manner ſuitable to his rank. When he entered the royal preſence, Columbus threw himſelf at the feet of his ſovereigns. He remained for ſome time ſilent; the various paſſions which agitated his mind ſuppreſſing his power of utterance. At length he recovered himſelf, and vindicated his conduct in a long diſcourſe, producing the moſt ſatisfying proofs of his own integrity as well as good intention, and evidence, no leſs clear, of the malevolence of his enemies, who, not ſatisfied with having ruined his fortune, laboured to deprive him of what alone was now left, his honour and his fame. Ferdinand received him with decent civility, and Iſabella with

1500. Nov. 23. Set at liberty but deprived of all authority. Dec. 17.

* Life of Columbus, c. 86. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. iv. c. 8—11. Gomara Hiſt. c. 23. Oviedo, lib, iii. c. 6.

tenderneſs

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1500. tenderneſs and reſpect. They both expreſſed their ſorrow for what had happened, diſavowed their knowledge of it, and joined in promiſing him protection and future favour. But though they inſtantly degraded Bovadilla, in order to remove from themſelves any ſuſpicion of having authoriſed his violent proceedings, they did not reſtore to Columbus his juriſdiction and privileges as viceroy of thoſe countries which he had diſcovered. Though willing to appear the avengers of Columbus's wrongs, that illiberal jealouſy which prompted them to inveſt Bovadilla with ſuch authority as put it in his power to treat the admiral with indignity, ſtill ſubſiſted. They were afraid to truſt a man to whom they were ſo highly indebted, and retaining him at court under various pretexts, they appointed Nicholas de Ovando, a knight of the military order of Alcantara, governor of Hiſpaniola *.

COLUMBUS was deeply affected with this new injury, which came from hands that ſeemed to be employed in making reparation for his paſt ſufferings. The ſenſibility with which great minds feel every thing that implies any ſuſpicion of their integrity, or that wears the aſpect of an affront, is exquiſite. Columbus had experienced both from the Spaniards; and their ungenerous conduct exaſperated him to ſuch a degree, that he could no longer conceal the ſentiments which it excited. Wherever he went, he carried about with him, as a memorial of their ingratitude, thoſe fetters with which he had been loaded. They were conſtantly hung up in his chamber, and he gave orders that when he died they ſhould be buried in his grave †.

* Herrera, dec. 1. lib. iv. c. 10---12. Life of Columbus, c. 87.

† Life of Columbus, c. 86. p. 577.

MEANWHILE,

BOOK II.

1501.

MEANWHILE, the ſpirit of diſcovery, notwithſtanding the ſevere check which it received by the ungenerous treatment of the man, who firſt excited it in Spain, continued active and vigorous. Roderigo di Baſtidas, a perſon of diſtinction, fitted out two ſhips in co-partnery with John de la Coſa, who having ſerved under the admiral in two of his voyages, was deemed the moſt ſkilful pilot in Spain. They ſteered directly towards the continent, arrived on the coaſt of Paria, and proceeding to the weſt, diſcovered all the coaſt of the province now known by the name of Terra Firma, from Cape de Vela, to the gulf of Darien. Not long after Ojeda, with his former aſſociate Amerigo Veſpucci, ſet out upon a ſecond voyage, and being unacquainted with the deſtination of Baſtidas, held the ſame courſe, and touched at the ſame places. The voyage of Baſtidas was proſperous and lucrative, that of Ojeda unfortunate. But both tended to increaſe the ardour of diſcovery; for in proportion as the Spaniards acquired a more extenſive knowledge of the American continent, their idea of its opulence and fertility increaſed *.

Progreſs of diſcovery.

January.

BEFORE theſe adventurers returned from their voyages, a fleet was equipped at the public expence, for carrying over Ovando, the new governor, to Hiſpaniola. His preſence there was extremely requiſite, in order to ſtop the inconſiderate career of Bovadilla, whoſe imprudent adminiſtration threatened the ſettlement with ruin. Conſcious of the violence and iniquity of his proceedings againſt Columbus, he continued to make it his ſole object to gain the favour and ſupport of his countrymen, by accommodating himſelf to their paſſions

Ovando appointed governor of Hiſpaniola.

* Herrera, dec 1. lib. iv. c. 11.

and

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and prejudices. With this view, he eſtabliſhed regulations, in every point the reverſe of thoſe which Columbus deemed eſſential to the proſperity of the colony. Inſtead of the ſevere diſcipline, neceſſary in order to habituate the diſſolute and corrupted members of which the ſociety was compoſed, to the reſtraints of law and ſubordination, he ſuffered them to enjoy ſuch uncontrouled licence, as encouraged the wildeſt exceſſes. Inſtead of protecting the Indians, he gave a legal ſanction to the oppreſſion of that unhappy people. He took the exact number of ſuch as ſurvived their paſt calamities, divided them into diſtinct claſſes, diſtributed them in property among his adherents, and reduced the whole iſland to a ſtate of complete ſervitude. As the avarice of the Spaniards was too rapacious and impatient to try any method of acquiring wealth but that of ſearching for gold, this ſervitude became as grievous as it was unjuſt. The Indians were driven in crowds to the mountains, and compelled to work in the mines by maſters who impoſed their taſks without mercy or diſcretion. Labour, ſo diſproportioned to their ſtrength and former habits of life, waſted that feeble race of men with ſuch rapid conſumption, as muſt have ſoon terminated in the utter extinction of the ancient inhabitants of the iſland *.

New regulations eſtabliſhed.

THE neceſſity of applying a ſpeedy remedy to thoſe diſorders, haſtened Ovando's departure. He had the command of the moſt reſpectable armament hitherty fitted out for the New World. It conſiſted of thirty-two ſhips, on board of which two thouſand five hundred perſons embarked, with an intention of ſettling in the country. Upon the arrival of the new governor with this powerful rein-

* Herrera, dec. 1. lib. iv. c. 11. &c. Oviedo Hiſt. lib. iii. c. 6. p. 97. Benzon. Hiſt. lib. i. c. 12. p. 51.

forcement

forcement to the colony, Bovadilla reſigned his charge, and was commanded to return inſtantly to Spain, in order to anſwer for his conduct. Roldan, and the other ringleaders of the mutineers who had been moſt active in oppoſing Columbus, were required to leave the iſland at the ſame time. A proclamation was iſſued, declaring the natives to be free ſubjects of Spain, of whom no ſervice was to be exacted contrary to their own inclination, and without paying them an adequate price for their labour. With reſpect to the Spaniards themſelves, various regulations were made, tending to ſuppreſs the licentious ſpirit which had been ſo fatal to the colony, and to eſtabliſh that reverence for law and order on which ſociety is founded, and to which it is indebted for its increaſe and ſtability. In order to limit the exorbitant gain which private perſons were ſuppoſed to make by working the mines, an ordinance was publiſhed, directing all the gold to be brought to a public ſmelting-houſe, and declaring one half of it to be the property of the crown *. 1502.

The diſagreeable ſituation of Columbus.

WHILE theſe ſteps were taking for ſecuring the tranquillity and welfare of the colony which Columbus had planted, he himſelf was engaged in the unpleaſant employment of ſoliciting the favour of an ungrateful court, and, notwithſtanding all his merit and ſervices, he ſolicited in vain. He demanded, in terms of the original capitulation in one thouſand four hundred and ninety-two, to be reinſtated in his office of viceroy over the countries which he had diſcovered. By a ſtrange fatality, the circumſtance which he urged in ſupport of his claim, determined a jealous monarch to reject it.

* Solorzano Politica Indiana, lib. i. c. 17. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. iv. c. 12.

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The greatneſs of his diſcoveries, and the proſpect of their increaſing value, made Ferdinand conſider the conceſſions in the capitulation as extravagant and impolitic. He was afraid of entruſting a ſubject with the exerciſe of a juriſdiction that now appeared to be ſo extremely extenſive, and might grow to be no leſs formidable. He inſpired Iſabella with the ſame ſuſpicions, and under various pretexts, equally frivolous and unjuſt, they eluded all Columbus's requiſitions to perform that which a ſolemn treaty bound them to accompliſh. After attending the court of Spain for near two years, as an humble ſuitor, he found it impoſſible to remove Ferdinand's prejudices and apprehenſions; and perceived, at length, that he laboured in vain, when he urged a claim of juſtice or merit with an intereſted and unfeeling prince.

He forms newſchemes ofdiſcovery.

But even this ungenerous return did not diſcourage him from purſuing the great object which firſt called forth his inventive genius, and excited him to attempt diſcovery. To open a new paſſage to the Eaſt Indies was his original and favourite ſcheme. This ſtill engroſſed his thoughts; and either from his own obſervations in his voyage to Paria, or from ſome obſcure hint of the natives, or from the accounts given by Baſtidas and de la Coſa of their expedition, he conceived an opinion that beyond the continent of America, there was a ſea which extended to the Eaſt Indies, and hoped to find ſome ſtrait or narrow neck of land by which a communication might be opened with it and the part of the ocean already known. By a very fortunate conjecture, he ſuppoſed this ſtrait or iſthmus to be ſituated near the gulf of Darien. Full of this idea, though he was now of an advanced age, worn out with fatigue, and broken with infirmities, he offered, with the alacrity of a youthful adventurer,

turer, to undertake a voyage which would aſcertain this important point, and perfect the grand ſcheme which from the beginning he propoſed to accompliſh. Several circumſtances concurred in diſpoſing Ferdinand and Iſabella to lend a favourable ear to this propoſal. They were glad to have the pretext of any honourable employment for removing from court a man with whoſe demands they deemed it impolitic to comply, and whoſe ſervices it was indecent to neglect. Though unwilling to reward Columbus, they were not inſenſible of his merit, and from their experience of his ſkill and conduct, had reaſon to give credit to his conjectures, and to confide in his ſucceſs. To theſe conſiderations, a third muſt be added of ſtill more powerful influence. About this time the Portugueſe fleet, under Cabral, arrived from the Indies; and, by the richneſs of its cargo, gave the people of Europe a more perfect idea, than they had hitherto been able to form, of the opulence and fertility of the eaſt. The Portugueſe had been more fortunate in their diſcoveries than the Spaniards. They had opened a communication with countries where induſtry arts, and elegance flouriſhed; and where commerce had been longer eſtabliſhed, and carried to greater extent than in any region of the earth. Their firſt voyages thither yielded immediate, as well as vaſt returns of profit, in commodities extremely precious and in great requeſt. Liſbon became immediately the ſeat of commerce and of wealth; while Spain had only the expectation of remote benefit, and of future gain from the weſtern world. Nothing, then, could be more acceptable to the Spaniards than Columbus's offer to conduct them to the eaſt, by a route which he expected to be ſhorter, as well as leſs dangerous, than that which the Portugueſe had taken. Even Ferdinand was rouſed by ſuch a

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prospect, and warmly approved of the undertaking.

1502. His fourth voyage.

But, interesting as the object of this voyage was to the nation, Columbus could procure only four small barks, the largest of which did not exceed seventy tons in burden, for performing it. Accustomed to brave danger, and to engage in arduous undertakings with inadequate force, he did not hesitate to accept the command of this pitiful squadron. His brother Bartholomew, and his second son Ferdinand, the historian of his actions, accompanied him. He sailed from Cadiz on the ninth of May, and touched, as usual, at the Canary Islands; from thence he purposed to have stood directly for the continent, but his largest vessel was so clumsy and unfit for service, as constrained him to bear away for Hispaniola, in hopes of exchanging her for some ship of the fleet that had carried over Ovando. When he arrived off St. Domingo, he found eighteen of these ships ready loaded, and on the point of departing for Spain. Columbus immediately acquainted the governor with the destination of his voyage, and the accident which had obliged him to alter his route. He requested permission to enter the harbour, not only that he might negociate the exchange of his ship, but that he might take shelter during a violent hurricane, of which he discerned the approach from various prognostics, which his experience and sagacity had taught him to observe. On that account, he advised him likewise to put off some days the departure of the fleet bound for Spain. But Ovando refused his request, and despised his counsel. Under circumstances in which humanity would have afforded refuge to a stranger, Columbus was denied

June 29.

nied admittance into a country of which he had discovered the exiſtence, and acquired the poſſeſſion. His ſalutary warning, which might have been attended to without any inconveniency, was regarded as the dream of a viſionary prophet, who arrogantly pretended to predict an event beyond the reach of human foreſight. The fleet ſet ſail for Spain. Next night the hurricane came on with dreadful impetuoſity. Columbus, aware of the danger, took precautions againſt it, and ſaved his little ſquadron. The fleet deſtined for Spain met with the fate which the raſhneſs and obſtinacy of its commanders merited. Of eighteen ſhips two or three only eſcaped. In this general wreck periſhed Bovadilla, Roldan, and the greater part of thoſe who had been the moſt active in perſecuting Columbus, and oppreſſing the Indians. Together with themſelves, all the wealth which they had acquired by their injuſtice and cruelty was ſwallowed up. It exceeded in value two hundred thouſand *peſo's*; an immenſe ſum at that period, and ſufficient not only to have ſcreened them from any ſevere ſcrutiny into their conduct, but to have ſecured them a gracious reception in the Spaniſh court. Among the ſhips that eſcaped, one had on board all the effects of Columbus which had been recovered from the wreck of his fortune. Hiſtorians, ſtruck with the exact diſcrimination of characters, as well as the juſt diſtribution of rewards and puniſhments, conſpicuous in thoſe events, univerſally attribute them to an immediate interpoſition of divine Providence, in order to avenge the wrongs of an injured man, and to puniſh the oppreſſors of an innocent people. Upon the ignorant and ſuperſtitious race of men, who were witneſſes of this occurrence, it made a different impreſſion. From an opinion, which vulgar admiration is apt to entertain with reſpect to perſons who have diſtinguiſhed themſelves by their ſagacity and inventions, they believed Columbus

1502.

to

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to be poſſeſſed of ſupernatural powers, and imagined that he had conjured up this dreadful ſtorm by magical art, and incantations, in order to be revenged of his enemies *.

July 14. Searches in vain for a paſſage to the Indian ocean.

COLUMBUS ſoon left Hiſpaniola, where he had met with ſuch an inhoſpitable reception, and ſtood towards the continent. After a tedious and dangerous voyage, he diſcovered Guiana, an iſland not far diſtant from the coaſt of Honduras. There he had an interview with ſome inhabitants of the continent, who arrived in a large canoe. They appeared to be a people more civilized, and who had made greater progreſs in the knowledge of uſeful arts, than any whom he had hitherto diſcovered. In return to the inquiries which the Spaniards made, with their uſual eagerneſs, concerning the places where they got the gold which they wore by way of ornament, they directed them to countries ſituated to the weſt, in which, according to their deſcription, gold was found in ſuch profuſion, that it was applied to the moſt common uſes. Inſtead of ſteering in queſt of a country ſo inviting, which would have conducted them along the coaſt of Yucatan to the rich empire of Mexico, Columbus was ſo bent upon his favourite ſcheme of finding out that ſtrait which communicated with the Indian ocean, that he bore away to the eaſt towards the gulf of Darien. In this navigation he diſcovered all the coaſt of the continent, from Cape Gracias a Dios, to a harbour which, on account of its beauty and ſecurity, he called Porto Bello. He ſearched, in vain, for the imaginary ſtrait, through which he expected to make his way into an unknown ſea; and though he went on

* Oviedo, lib. iii. 3. 7. 9. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. v. c. 1, 2. Life of Columbus, c. 88.

ſhore

ſhore ſeveral times, and advanced into the country, he did not penetrate ſo far as to croſs the narrow iſthmus which ſeparates the gulph of Mexico from the great ſouthern ocean. He was ſo much delighted, however, with the fertility of the country, and conceived ſuch an idea of its wealth, from the ſpecimens of gold produced by the natives, that he reſolved to leave a ſmall colony upon the river Belem, in the province of Veragua, under the command of his brother, and to return himſelf to Spain, in order to procure what was requiſite for rendering the eſtabliſhment permanent. But the ungovernable ſpirit of the people under his command, deprived Columbus of the glory of planting the firſt colony on the continent of America. Their inſolence and rapaciouſneſs provoked the natives to take arms, and as they were a more hardy and warlike race of men than the inhabitants of the iſlands, they cut off part of the Spaniards, and obliged the reſt to abandon a ſtation which they were unable to maintain *.

1502.

1503.

THIS repulſe, the firſt that the Spaniards met with from any of the American nations, was not the only misfortune that befel Columbus; it was followed by a ſucceſſion of all the diſaſters to which navigation is expoſed. Furious hurricanes, with violent ſtorms of thunder and lightning, threatened his leaky veſſels with deſtruction; while his diſcontented crew, exhauſted with fatigue, and deſtitute of proviſions, was unwilling or unable to execute his commands. One of his ſhips periſhed; he was obliged to abandon another, as unfit for ſervice; and with the two which remained, he quitted that part of the continent which in his anguiſh he named the Coaſt of Vexation †, and bore away for Hiſpaniola. New diſtreſſes awaited him in his voy-

Shipwrecked on the coaſt of Jamaica.

* Herrera, dec. 1. lib. v. c. 5, &c. Life of Columbus, c. 89, &c. Oviedo, lib. iii. c. 9. † La coſta de los contraſtes.

age

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1053. age. He was driven back by a violent tempeſt from the coaſt of Cuba, his ſhips fell foul of one another, and were ſo much ſhattered by the ſhock, that, with the utmoſt difficulty, they reached Ja-

June 24. maica, where he was obliged to run them aground, to prevent them from ſinking. The meaſure of his calamities ſeemed now to be full. He was caſt aſhore upon an iſland at a conſiderable diſtance from the only ſettlement of the Spaniards in America. His ſhips were ruined beyond the poſſibility of being repaired. To convey an account of his ſituation to Hiſpaniola, appeared impracticable; and without this it was in vain to expect relief. His genius, fertile in reſources, and moſt vigorous in thoſe perilous extremities when feeble minds abandon themſelves to deſpair, diſcovered the only expedient which afforded any proſpect of deliverance. He had recourſe to the hoſpitable kindneſs of the natives, who, conſidering the Spaniards as beings of a ſuperior nature, were eager, on every occaſion, to miniſter to their wants. From them he obtained two of their canoes, each formed out of the trunk of a ſingle tree, hollowed with fire, and ſo miſſhapen and aukward as hardly to merit the name of boats. In theſe, which were fit only for creeping along the coaſt, or croſſing from one bay to another, Mendez, a Spaniard, and Fieſchi, a Genoeſe, two Gentlemen particularly attached to Columbus, gallantly offered to ſet out for Hiſpaniola, upon a voyage of above thirty leagues *. This they accompliſhed in ten days, after ſurmounting incredible dangers, and enduring ſuch fatigue, that ſeveral of the Indians who accompanied them ſunk under it, and died. The attention paid to them by the governor of Hiſpaniola was neither ſuch as their courage merited, nor the diſtreſs of the perſons from whom they came, required. Ovando, from a

* Oviedo, lib. iii. c. 9.

mean

mean jealouſy of Columbus, was afraid of allowing him to ſet his foot in the iſland under his government. This ungenerous paſſion hardened his heart againſt every tender ſentiment, which reflection upon the ſervices and misfortunes of that great man, or compaſſion for his own fellow-citizens, involved in the ſame calamities, muſt have excited. Mendez and Fieſchi ſpent eight months in ſoliciting relief for their commander and aſſociates, without any proſpect of obtaining it. 1503.

His diſtreſs and ſufferings there.

During this period, various paſſions agitated the mind of Columbus, and his companions in adverſity. At firſt the expectation of ſpeedy deliverance, from the ſucceſs of Mendez and Fieſchi's voyage, cheered the ſpirits of the moſt deſponding. After ſome time the more timorous began to ſuſpect that they had miſcarried in their daring attempt. At length, all concluded that they had periſhed. The ray of hope which had broke in upon them, made their condition appear now more diſmal. Deſpair, heightened by diſappointment, ſettled in every breaſt. Their laſt reſource had failed, and nothing remained but to end their miſerable days among naked ſavages, far from their country and their friends. The ſeamen, in a tranſport of rage, roſe in open mutiny, threatened the life of Columbus, whom they reproached as the author of all their calamities, ſeized ten canoes, which he had purchaſed from the Indians, and deſpiſing his remonſtrances and entreaties, made off with them to a diſtant part of the iſland. At the ſame time, the natives murmured at the long reſidence of the Spaniards in their country. As their induſtry was not greater than that of their neighbours in Hiſpaniola, like them, they found the burden of ſupporting ſo many ſtrangers to be altogether intolerable. They began to bring in proviſions with reluctance, they furniſhed them with 1504.

BOOK II. 1504.

with a ſparing hand, and threatened to withdraw thoſe ſupplies altogether. Such a reſolution muſt quickly have been fatal to the Spaniards. Their ſafety depended upon the good-will of the Indians; and unleſs they could revive the admiration and reverence with which that ſimple people had at firſt beheld them, deſtruction was unavoidable. Though the licentious proceedings of the mutineers had, in a great meaſure, effaced thoſe impreſſions which had been ſo favourable to the Spaniards, the ingenuity of Columbus ſuggeſted a happy artifice, that not only reſtored but heightened the high opinion which the Indians had originally entertained of them. By his ſkill in aſtronomy, he knew that there was ſhortly to be a total eclipſe of the moon. He aſſembled all the principal perſons of the diſtrict around him on the day before it happened, and, after reproaching them for their fickleneſs in withdrawing their affection and aſſiſtance from men whom they had lately revered, he told them, that the Spaniards were ſervants of the great Spirit who dwells in heaven, who made and governs the world; that he, offended at their refuſing to ſupport men who were the objects of his peculiar favour, was preparing to puniſh this crime with exemplary ſeverity, and that very night the moon ſhould withhold her light, and appear of a bloody hue, as a ſign of the divine wrath, and an emblem of the vengeance ready to fall upon them. To this marvellous prediction ſome of them liſtened with the careleſs indifference peculiar to the people of America; others, with the credulous aſtoniſhment natural to barbarians. But when the moon began gradually to be darkened, and at length appeared of a red colour, all were ſtruck with terror. They ran with conſternation to their houſes, and returning inſtantly to Columbus loaded with proviſions, threw them at his feet, conjuring him to intercede

with

with the Great Spirit to avert the deſtruction with which they were threatened. Columbus, ſeeming to be moved by their entreaties, promiſed to comply with their deſire. The eclipſe went off, the moon recovered its ſplendour, and from that day the Spaniards were not only furniſhed profuſely with proviſions, but the natives, with ſuperſtitious attention, avoided every thing that could give them offence *.

A cruel addition to them.

DURING thoſe tranſactions, the mutineers had made repeated attempts to paſs over to Hiſpaniola in the canoes which they had ſeized. But, from their own miſconduct, or the violence of the winds and currents, their efforts were all unſucceſsful. Enraged at this diſappointment, they marched towards that part of the iſland where Columbus remained, threatening him with new danger and inſults. While they were advancing, an event happened more cruel and afflicting than any calamity which he dreaded from them. The governor of Hiſpaniola, whoſe mind was ſtill filled with ſome dark ſuſpicions of Columbus, ſent a ſmall bark to Jamaica, not to deliver his diſtreſſed countrymen, but to ſpy out their condition. Leſt the ſympathy of thoſe whom he employed ſhould afford them relief, contrary to his intention, he gave the command of this veſſel to Eſcobar, an inveterate enemy of Columbus, who adhering to his inſtructions with malignant accuracy, caſt anchor at ſome diſtance from the iſland, approached the ſhore in a ſmall boat, obſerved the wretched plight of the Spaniards, delivered a letter of empty compliment to the admiral, received his anſwer, and departed. When the Spaniards firſt deſcried the veſſel ſtanding towards the iſland, every heart exulted, as if the

* Life of Columbus, c. 103. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. vi. c, 5, 6. Benzon, Hiſt. lib. i. c. 14.

long

BOOK II. 1504. long expected hour of their deliverance had at length arrived; but when it diſappeared ſo ſuddenly, they ſunk into the deepeſt dejection, and all their hopes died away. Columbus alone, though he felt moſt ſenſibly this wanton inſult which Ovando added to his paſt neglect, retained ſuch compoſure of mind, as to be able to cheer his followers. He aſſured them, that Mendez and Fieſchi had reached Hiſpaniola in ſafety; that they would ſpeedily procure ſhips to carry them off; and as Eſcobar's veſſel could not take them all on board, that he had refuſed to go with her, becauſe he was determined never to abandon the faithful companions of his diſtreſs. Soothed with the expectation of ſpeedy deliverance, and delighted with his apparent generoſity in attending more to their preſervation than to his own ſafety, their ſpirits revived, and he regained their confidence *.

WITHOUT this confidence, he could not have reſiſted the mutineers, who were now at hand. All his endeavours to reclaim thoſe deſperate men had no effect but to increaſe their frenzy. Their demands became every day more extravagant, and their intentions more violent and bloody. The common ſafety rendered it neceſſary to oppoſe them with open force. Columbus, who had been long afflicted with the gout, could not take the field. His brother, the Adelantado, marched againſt
May 20. them. They quickly met. The mutineers rejected with ſcorn terms of accommodation, which he once more offered them, and ruſhed on boldly to the attack. They fell not upon an enemy unprepared to receive them. In the firſt ſhock, ſeveral of their moſt daring leaders were ſlain. The Adelantado, whoſe ſtrength was equal to his courage,

* Life of Columbus, c. 104. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. vi. c. 17.

cloſed

closed with their captain, wounded, disarmed, and took him prisoner *. At sight of this, the rest fled with a dastardly fear, suitable to their former insolence. Soon after, they submitted in a body to Columbus, and bound themselves by the most solemn oaths to obey all his commands. Hardly was tranquility re-established, when the ships appeared, whose arrival Columbus had promised with great address, though he could foresee it with little certainty. With transports of joy, the Spaniards quitted an island in which the unfeeling jealousy of Ovando had suffered them to languish above a year, exposed to misery in all its various forms. 1504.

Aug. 13. His deliverance, and arrival at Hispaniola.

When they arrived at St. Domingo, the governor, with the mean artifice of a vulgar mind, that labours to atone for insolence by servility, fawned on the man whom he envied, and had attempted to ruin. He received Columbus with the most studied respect, lodged him in his own house, and distinguished him with every mark of honour. But, amidst those over-acted demonstrations of regard, he could not conceal the hatred and malignity latent in his heart. He set at liberty the captain of the mutineers, whom Columbus had brought over, in chains, to be tried for his crimes, and threatened such as had adhered to the admiral with proceeding to a judicial inquiry into their conduct. Columbus submitted in silence to what he could not redress; but discovered an extreme impatience to quit a country under the jurisdiction of a man who had treated him, on every occasion, with inhumanity and injustice. His preparations were soon finished, and he set sail for Spain with two ships. Disasters similar to those which had accompanied him through life

Sept. 12.

* Life of Columbus, c. 107. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. vi. c. 11.

continued

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continued to purſue him to the end of his career. One of his veſſels being diſabled, was ſoon forced back to St. Domingo; the other, ſhattered by violent ſtorms, failed ſeven hundred leagues with jury-maſts, and reached with difficulty the port of St. Lucar *

December.

Death of Iſabella. Nov. 9.

THERE he received the account of an event the moſt fatal that could have befallen him, and which completed his misfortunes. This was the death of his patroneſs queen Iſabella, in whoſe juſtice, humanity, and favour, he confided as his laſt reſource. None now remained to redreſs his wrongs, or to reward him for his ſervices and ſufferings, but Ferdinand, who had ſo long oppoſed and ſo often injured him. To ſolicit a prince thus prejudiced againſt him, was an occupation no leſs irkſome than hopeleſs. In this, however, was Columbus doomed to employ the cloſe of his days. As ſoon as his health was in ſome degree re-eſtabliſhed, he repaired to court; and though he was received there with civility barely decent, he plied Ferdinand with petition after petition, demanding the puniſhment of his oppreſſors, and the reſtitution of all the privileges beſtowed upon him by the capitulation of one thouſand four hundred and ninety-two. Ferdinand amuſed him with fair words and unmeaning promiſes. Inſtead of granting his claims, he propoſed expedients in order to elude them, and ſpun out the affair with ſuch apparent art, as plainly diſcovered his intention that it ſhould never be terminated. The declining health of Columbus flattered Ferdinand with the hopes of being ſoon delivered from an importunate ſuitor, and encouraged him to perſevere in this illiberal plan. Nor was he

* Life of Columbus, c. 108. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. vi. c. 12.

deceived

deceived in his expectations. Diſguſted with the ingratitude of a monarch whom he had ſerved with ſuch fidelity and ſucceſs, exahuſted with the fatigues and hardſhips which he had endured, and broken with the infirmities which theſe brought upon him, Columbus ended his life at Valladolid on the twentieth of May one thouſand five hundred and ſix, in the fifty-ninth year of his age. He died with a compoſure of mind ſuitable to the magnanimity which diſtinguiſhed his character, and with ſentiments of piety becoming that ſupreme reſpect for religion, which he manifeſted in every occurrence of his life †.

Death of Columbus.

† Life of Columbus, c. 108. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. vi. c. 13, 14, 15.

THE

THE HISTORY OF AMERICA.

BOOK III.

WHILE Columbus was employed in his laſt voyage, ſeveral events worthy of notice happened in Hiſpaniola. The colony there, the parent and nurſe of all the ſubſequent eſtabliſhments of Spain in the New World, gradually acquired the form of a regular and proſperous ſociety. The humane ſolicitude of Iſabella to protect the Indians from oppreſſion, and particularly the proclamation, by which the Spaniards were prohibited to compel them to work, retarded, it is true, for ſome time, the progreſs of improvement. The natives, who conſidered exemption from toil as ſupreme felicity, ſcorned every allurement and reward by which they were invited to labour. The Spaniards had not a ſufficient number of hands either to work the mines or to cultivate the ſoil. Several of the firſt coloniſts, who had been accuſtomed to the ſervice of the Indians, quitted the iſland, when deprived of thoſe inſtruments without which they knew not how

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1504. State of the colony in Hiſpaniola.

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how to carry on any operation. Many of thoſe who came over with Ovando, were ſeized with the diſtempers peculiar to the climate, and in a ſhort ſpace above a thouſand of them died. At the ſame time, the demand of one half of the product of the mines as the royal ſhare, was found to be an exaction ſo exorbitant, that no adventurers would engage to work them upon ſuch terms. In order to ſave the colony from ruin, Ovando ventured to relax the rigour of the royal edicts. He made a new diſtribution of the Indians among the Spaniards, compelling them to labour, for a ſtated time, in digging the mines, or in cultivating the ground; but, in order to ſcreen himſelf from the imputation of having ſubjected them again to ſervitude, he enjoined their maſters to pay them a certain ſum, as the price of their work. He reduced the royal ſhare of the gold found in the mines from the half to the third part, and ſoon after lowered it to a fifth, at which it long remained. Notwithſtanding Iſabella's tender concern for the good treatment of the Indians, and Ferdinand's eagerneſs to improve the royal revenue, Ovando perſuaded the court to approve of both theſe regulations *.

1504.

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War with the Indians.

BUT the Indians, after enjoying reſpite from oppreſſion, though during a ſhort interval, now felt the yoke of bondage to be ſo galling, that they made ſeveral attempts to vindicate their own liberty. This the Spaniards conſidered as rebellion, and took arms in order to reduce them to ſubjection. When war is carried on between nations whoſe ſtate of improvement is in any degree ſimilar, the means of defence bear ſome proportion to thoſe employed in the attack; and in this equal conteſt ſuch efforts muſt be made, ſuch talents are diſplayed, and ſuch

* Herrera, dec. 1. lib. v. c. 3.

paſſions

paſſions rouſed, as exhibit mankind to view in a ſituation no leſs ſtriking than intereſting. It is one of the nobleſt functions of hiſtory, to obſerve and to delineate men at a juncture when their minds are moſt violently agitated, and all their powers and paſſions are called forth. Hence the operations of war, and the ſtruggles between contending ſtates, have been deemed by hiſtorians, ancient as well as modern, a capital and important article in the annals of human actions, but in a conteſt between naked ſavages, and one of the moſt warlike of the European nations, where ſcience, courage, and diſcipline on one ſide, were oppoſed by timidity, ignorance, and diſorder on the other, a particular detail of events would be as unpleaſant as uninſtructive. If the ſimplicity and innocence of the Indians had inſpired the Spaniards with humanity, had ſoftened the pride of ſuperiority into compaſſion, and had induced them to improve the inhabitants of the New world, inſtead of oppreſſing them, ſome ſudden acts of violence, like the too rigorous chaſtiſements of impatient inſtructors, might have been related without horror. But, unfortunately, this conſciouſneſs of ſuperiority operated in a different manner. The Spaniards were advanced ſo far beyond the natives of America in improvement of every kind, that they viewed them with contempt. They conceived the Americans to be beings of an inferior nature, who were not intitled to the rights and privileges of men. In peace they ſubjected them to ſervitude. In war, they paid no regard to thoſe laws, which, by a tacit convention between contending nations, regulate hoſtility, and ſet ſome bounds to its rage. They conſidered them not as men fighting in defence of their liberty, but as ſlaves, who had revolted againſt their maſters. Their caziques, when taken, were condemned, like the leaders of banditti, to the moſt cruel and

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ignominious puniſhments; and all their ſubjects, without regarding the diſtinction of ranks eſtabliſhed among them, were reduced to the ſame ſtate of abject ſlavery. With ſuch a ſpirit and ſentiments were hoſtilities carried on againſt the cazique of Higuey, a province of the eaſtern extremity of the iſland. This war was occaſioned by the perfidy of the Spaniards, in violating a treaty which they had made with the natives, and it was terminated by hanging up the cazique, who defended his people with bravery ſo far ſuperior to that of his countrymen, as intitled him to a better fate *.

The cruel and treacherous conduct of Ovando.

THE conduct of Ovando, in another part of the iſland, was ſtill more treacherous and cruel. The province anciently named Xaragua, which extends from the fertile plain where Leogane is now ſituated, to the weſtern extremity of the iſland, was ſubject to a female cazique, named Anacoana, highly reſpected by the natives. She, from that partial fondneſs with which the women of America were attached to the Europeans, (the cauſe of which ſhall be afterwards explained) had always courted the friendſhip of the Spaniards, and loaded them with good offices. But ſome of the adherents of Roldan having ſettled in her country, were ſo much exaſperated at her endeavouring to reſtrain their exceſſes, that they accuſed her of having formed a plan to throw off the yoke, and to exterminate the Spaniards. Ovando, though he knew well how little credit was due to ſuch profligate men, marched, without further inquiry, towards Xaragua, with three hundred foot and ſeventy horſemen. To prevent the Indians from taking alarm at this hoſtile appearance, he gave out that his ſole intention was to viſit Anacoana, to whom

* Herrera, dec. 1. lib. vi. c. 9, 10.

his

his countrymen had been ſo much indebted, in the moſt reſpectful manner, and to regulate with her the mode of levying the tribute payable to the king of Spain. Anacoana, in order to receive this illuſtrious gueſt with due honour, aſſembled the principal men in her dominions, to the number of three hundred, and advancing at the head of theſe, accompanied by a vaſt croud of perſons of inferior rank, ſhe welcomed Ovando with ſongs and dances, according to the mode of the country, and conduct him to the place of her reſidence. There he was feaſted for ſome days, with all the kindneſs of ſimple hoſpitality, and amuſed with the games and ſpectacles uſual among the Americans upon occaſions of mirth and feſtivity. But, amidſt the ſecurity which this inſpired, Ovando was meditating the deſtruction of his unſuſpicious entertainer and her ſubjects; and the mean perfidy with which he executed his ſcheme, equalled his barbarity in forming it. Under colour of exhibiting to the Indians the parade of an European tournament, he advanced with his troops, in battle array, towards the houſe in which Anacoana and the chiefs who attended her were aſſembled. The infantry took poſſeſſions of all the avenues which led to the village. The horſemen encompaſſed the houſe. Theſe movements were the object of admiration without any mixture of fear, until, upon a ſignal which had been concerted, the Spaniards ſuddenly drew their ſwords, and ruſhed upon the Indians, defenceleſs, and aſtoniſhed at an act of treachery which exceeded the conception of undeſigning men. In a moment Anacoana was ſecured. All her attendants, were ſeized and bound. Fire was ſet to the houſe; and, without examination or conviction, all theſe unhappy perſons, the moſt illuſtrious in their own country, were conſumed in the flames. Anacoana was reſerved

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1505. reſerved for a more ignominious fate. She was carried in chains to St. Domingo, and, after the formality of a trial before Spaniſh judges, ſhe was condemned upon the evidence of thoſe very men who had betrayed her, to be publicly hanged.*.

Reduction of the Indians, and its effects.

OVERAWED and humbled by this atrocious treatment of their princes and nobles, who were objects of their higheſt reverence, the people in all the provinces of Hiſpaniola ſubmitted, without farther reſiſtance, to the Spaniſh yoke. Upon the death of Iſabella, all the regulations tending to mitigate the rigour of their ſervitude were forgotten. The ſmall gratuity paid to them as the price of
1506. their labour was withdrawn; and at the ſame time the taſks impoſed upon them were increaſed. Ovando, without any reſtraint, diſtributed Indians among his friends in the iſland. Ferdinand, to whom the queen had left by will one half of the revenue ariſing from the ſettlements in the New World, conferred grants of a ſimilar nature upon his courtiers, as the leaſt expenſive mode of rewarding their ſervices. They farmed out the Indians, of whom they were rendered proprietors, to their countrymen ſettled in Hiſpaniola; and that wretched people, being compelled to labour in order to ſatisfy the rapacity of both, the exactions of their oppreſſors no longer knew any bounds. But, barbarous as their policy was, and fatal to the inhabitants of Hiſpaniola, it produced for ſome time, very conſiderable effects. By calling forth the force of a whole nation, and exerting it in one direction, the working of the mines was carried on with amazing rapidity and ſucceſs. During ſeveral years, the gold brought into the royal ſmelting-houſes in Hiſ-

* Oviedo, lib. iii. c. 12. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. vi. c. 4. Oviedo, lib. iii. c. 12. Relacion de deſtruyc. de las Indias, par Bart. de las Caſas, p. 8.

paniola

paniola amounted annually to four hundred and sixty thousand pesos, above a hundred thousand pounds sterling; which, if we attend to the great change in the value of money since the beginning of the sixteenth century to the present times, must appear an immense sum. Vast fortunes were created, of a sudden, by some. Others dissipated in ostentatious profusion, what they acquired with facility. Dazzled by both, new adventurers crouded to America, with the most eager impatience, to share in those treasures which had enriched their countrymen; and, notwithstanding the mortality occasioned by the unhealthiness of the climate, the colony continued to increase*. 1506.

Ovando governed the Spaniards with wisdom and justice, not inferior to the rigour with which he treated the Indians. He established equal laws, and, by executing them with impartiality accustomed the people of the colony to reverence them. He founded several new towns in different parts of the island, and allured inhabitants to them, by the concession of various immunities. He endeavoured to turn the attention of the Spaniards to some branch of industry more useful than that of searching for gold in the mines. Some slips of the sugar-cane having been brought from the Canary islands by way of experiment, they were found to thrive with such increase in the rich soil and warm climate to which they were transplanted, that the cultivation of them soon became an object of commerce. Extensive plantations were begun; sugar-works, which the Spaniards called *ingenio's*, from the various machinery employed in them, were erected, and in a few years the manufacture of this commodity was the great occupation of the inhabi- Progress of the colony.

* Herrera dec. 1. lib. vi. c. 18, &c.

tants

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tonts of Hiſpaniola, and the moſt conſiderable ſource of their wealth*.

1506. Political regulations of Ferdinand.

THE prudent endeavours of Ovando, to promote the welfare of the colony, were powerfully ſeconded by Ferdinand. The large remittances which he received from the New World, opened his eyes, at length, with reſpect to the importance of thoſe diſcoveries, which he had hitherto affected to undervalue. Fortune, and his own addreſs, having now extricated him out of thoſe difficulties in which he had been involved by the death of his queen, and by his diſputes with his ſon-in-law about the government of her dominions†, he had full leiſure to turn his attention to the affairs of America. To his provident ſagacity, Spain is indebted for many of thoſe regulations which gradually formed that ſyſtem of profound, but jealous policy, by which ſhe governs her dominions in the New World. He erected a court, diſtinguiſhed by the title of the *Caſa de Contratacion*, or Board of Trade, compoſed of perſons eminent for rank and abilities, to whom he committed the adminiſtration of American affairs. This board aſſembled regularly in Seville, and was inveſted with a diſtinct and extenſive juriſdiction. He gave a regular form to eccleſiaſtical government in America, by nominating archbiſhops, biſhops, deans, together with clergymen of ſubordinate ranks to take charge of the Spaniards eſtabliſhed there, as well as of the natives, who ſhould embrace the Chriſtian faith. But, notwithſtanding the obſequious devotion of the Spaniſh court to the Papal See, ſuch was Ferdinand's ſolicitude to prevent any foreign power from claiming juriſdiction, or acquiring influence, in his new dominions, that

1507.

* Oviedo, lib. iv. c. 8.

† Hiſt. of the Reign of Charles V. vol. ii. p, 6, &c.

he

he reſerved to the crown of Spain the ſole right of patronage to the benefices in America, and ſtipulated that no papal bull or mandate ſhould be promulgated there, until it was previouſly examined and approved of by his council. With the ſame ſpirit of jealouſy, he prohibited any goods to be exported to America, or any perſon to ſettle there, without a ſpecial licence from that council *. 1506.

The number of the Indians diminiſhes faſt.

But, notwithſtanding this attention to the police and welfare of the colony, a calamity impended which threatened its diſſolution. The original inhabitants, on whoſe labour the Spaniards in Hiſpaniola depended for their proſperity, and even their exiſtence, waſted ſo faſt, that the extinction of the whole race ſeemed to be inevitable. When Columbus diſcovered Hiſpaniola, the number of its inhabitants was computed to be at leaſt a million ‡. They were now reduced to ſixty thouſand in the ſpace of fifteen years. This conſumption of the human ſpecies, no leſs amazing than rapid, was the effect of ſeveral concurring cauſes. The natives of the American iſlands were of a more feeble conſtitution than the inhabitants of the other hemiſphere. They could neither perform the ſame work, nor endure the ſame fatigue with men whoſe organs were of a more vigorous conformation. The inactive indolence in which they delighted to paſs their days, as it was the effect of their debility, contributed likewiſe to increaſe it, and rendered them, from habit as well as conſtitution, incapable of hard labour. The food on which they ſubſiſted, afforded little nouriſhment, and they were accuſtomed to take it in ſmall quantities, not ſufficient to invigorate a languid frame, and render it equal to the

* Herrera, dec. 1. lib. vi. c. 19. 20.
† Ibid. dec. 1. lib. x. c. 12.

efforts

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efforts of induſtry. The Spaniards, without attending to thoſe peculiarities in the conſtitution of
1506. the Americans, impoſed taſks upon them ſo diſproportioned to their ſtrength, that many ſunk under the fatigue, and ended their wretched days. Others, prompted by impatience and deſpair, cut ſhort their own lives with a violent hand. Famine, brought on by compelling ſuch numbers to abandon the culture of their lands, in order to labour in the mines, proved fatal to many. Diſeaſes of various kinds, ſome occaſioned by the hardſhips to which they were expoſed, and others by their intercourſe with the Europeans, compleated the deſolation of the iſland. Being thus deprived of the inſtruments which they were accuſtomed to employ, the Spaniards found it impoſſible to extend their improvements, or even to carry on the works
1508. which they had already begun. In order to provide an immediate remedy for an evil ſo alarming, Ovando propoſed to tranſport the inhabitants of the Lucayo iſlands to Hiſpaniola, under pretence that they might be civilized with more facility, and inſtructed to greater advantage in the Chriſtian religion, if they were united to the Spaniſh colony, and under the immediate inſpection of the miſſionaries ſettled there. Ferdinand, deceived by this artifice, or willing to connive at an act of violence which policy repreſented as neceſſary, gave his aſſent to the propoſal. Several veſſels were fitted out for the Lucayos, the commanders of which informed the natives, with whoſe language they were now well acquainted, that they came from a delicious country, in which their departed anceſtors reſided, by whom they were ſent to invite them to reſort thither, to partake of the bliſs which they enjoyed. That ſimple people liſtened with wonder and credulity; and, fond of viſiting their relations and friends in that happy region, followed the Spaniards with

with eagerneſs. By this artifice, above forty thouſand were decoyed into Hiſpaniola, to ſhare in the ſufferings which were the lot of the inhabitants of that iſland, and to mingle their groans and tears with thoſe of that wretched race of men *. 1508.

New diſcoveries and ſettlements.

THE Spaniards had, for ſome time, carried on their operations in the mines of Hiſpaniola with ſuch ardour, as well as ſucceſs, that they ſeemed to have engroſſed their whole attention. The ſpirit of diſcovery languiſhed; and, ſince the laſt voyage of Columbus, no enterpriſe of any moment had been undertaken. But as the decreaſe of the Indians rendered it impoſſible to acquire wealth in that iſland with the ſame rapidity as formerly, this urged them to ſearch for new countries, where their avarice might be gratified with more facility. Juan Ponce de Leon, who commanded under Ovando in the eaſtern diſtrict of Hiſpaniola, paſſed over to the iſland of St. John de Porto Rico, which Columbus had diſcovered in his ſecond voyage, and penetrated into the interior part of the country. As he found the ſoil to be fertile, and expected from ſome ſymptoms, as well as from the information of the inhabitants, to diſcover mines of gold in the mountains, Ovando permitted him to attempt making a ſettlement in the iſland. This was eaſily effected by an officer eminent for conduct no leſs than for courage. In a few years Porto Rico was ſubjected to the Spaniſh government, the natives were reduced to ſervitude; and, being treated with the ſame inconſiderate rigour as their neighbours in Hiſpaniola, the race of original inhabitants, worn out with fatigue and ſufferings, was ſoon exterminated ‡.

* Herrera, dec. 1. lib. vii. c. 3. Oviedo, lib. iii. c. 6. Gomara Hiſt. c. 41.

‡ Herrera, dec. 1. lib. vii. c. 1—4. Gomara Hiſt. c. 44. Relacion de B. de las Caſas, p. 10.

ABOUT

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1508.

ABOUT the ſame time, Juan Diaz de Solis, in conjunction with Vincent Yanez Pinzon, one of Columbus's original companions, made a voyage to the continent. They held the ſame courſe which Columbus had taken, as far as to the iſland of Guiana; but, ſtanding from thence to the weſt, they diſcovered a new and extenſive province, afterwards known by the name of Yucatan, and proceeded a conſiderable way along the coaſt of that country *. Though nothing memorable occurred in this voyage, it deſerves notice, becauſe it led to diſcoveries of greater importance. For the ſame reaſon, the voyage of Sebaſtian de Ocampo muſt be mentioned. By the command of Ovando, he ſailed round Cuba, and firſt diſcovered, with certainty, that this country, which Columbus once ſuppoſed to be a part of the continent, was a large iſland ‡.

Diego Columbus appointed governor of Hiſpaniola.

THIS voyage round Cuba was one of the laſt occurrences under the adminiſtration of Ovando. Ever ſince the death of Columbus, his ſon Don Diego had been employed in ſoliciting Ferdinand to grant him the offices of viceroy and admiral in the New World, together with all the other immunities and profits which deſcended to him by inheritance, in conſequence of the original capitulation with his father. But if theſe dignities and revenues appeared ſo conſiderable to Ferdinand, that at the expence of being deemed unjuſt as well as ungrateful, he had wreſted them from Columbus, it is not ſurpriſing that he ſhould be unwilling to confer them on his ſon. Accordingly, Don Diego waſted two years in inceſſant but fruitleſs importunity. Weary of this, he endeavoured at length to obtain by a legal ſentence, what he could not pro-

* Herrera, dec. 1. lib. vi. c. 17. ‡ Ibid. lib. vii. c. 1.

cure

cure from the favour of an intereſted monarch. He commenced a ſuit againſt Ferdinand before the council that managed Indian affairs, and that court, with integrity which reflects honour upon its proceedings, decided againſt the king, and ſuſtained Don Diego's claim of the vice-royalty, and all the other privileges ſtipulated in the capitulation. Even after this decree, Ferdinand's repugnance to put a ſubject in poſſeſſion of ſuch extenſive rights, might have thrown in new obſtacles, if Don Diego had not taken a ſtep which intereſted very powerful perſons in the ſucceſs of his claims. The ſentence of the council of the Indies gave him a title to a rank ſo elevated, and a fortune ſo opulent, that he found no difficulty in concluding a marriage with Donna Maria, daughter of Don Ferdinand de Toledo, great commendator of Leon, and brother of the duke of Alva, a grandee of the firſt rank, and nearly related to the king. The duke and his family eſpouſed ſo warmly the cauſe of their new ally, that Ferdinand could not reſiſt their ſolicitations. He recalled Ovando, and appointed Don Diego his ſucceſſor, though, even in conferring this favour, he could not conceal his jealouſy; for he allowed him to aſſume only the title of governor, not that of viceroy, which had been adjudged to belong to him *.

1506.

1509.

He repairs to Hiſpaniola.

He ſoon repaired to Hiſpaniola, attended by his brother, his uncles, his wife, whom the courteſy of the Spaniards honoured with the title of vice-queen, and a numerous retinue of perſons of both ſexes, born of good families. He lived with a ſplendour and magnificence hitherto unknown in the New World; and the family of Columbus ſeemed now to enjoy the honours and rewards due to his inventive genius, of which he himſelf had been cruelly defrauded. The colony itſelf acquired new luſtre.

* Herrera, dec. 1. lib. vii. c. 4, &c.

by

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by the acceſſion of ſo many inhabitants of a different rank and character from moſt of thoſe who had hitherto migrated to America, and many of the moſt illuſtrious families in the Spaniſh ſettlements are deſcended from the perſons who at that time accompanied Don Diego Columbus *.

No benefit accrued to the unhappy natives from this change of governors. Don Diego was not only authoriſed by a royal edict to continue the *repartimientos*, or diſtribution of Indians, but the particular number which he might grant to every perſon, according to his rank in the colony, was ſpecified. He availed himſelf of that permiſſion; and ſoon after he landed at St. Domingo, he divided ſuch Indians as were ſtill unappropriated, among his relations and attendants †.

Pearl fiſhery of Cubagua.

THE next care of the new governor was to comply with an inſtruction which he received from the king, about ſettling a colony in Cubagua, a ſmall iſland which Columbus had diſcovered in his third voyage. Though this barren ſpot hardly yielded ſubſiſtence to its wretched inhabitants, ſuch quantities of thoſe oyſters which produce pearls were found on its coaſt, that it did not long eſcape the inquiſitive avarice of the Spaniards, and became a place of conſiderable reſort. Large fortunes were acquired by the fiſhery of pearls, which was carried on with extraordinary ardour. The Indians, eſpecially thoſe from the Lucayo iſlands, were compelled to dive for them; and this dangerous and unhealthy employment was an additional calamity, which contributed not a little to the extinction of that devoted race ‡.

* Oviedo, lib. iii. c. 1. † Recopilacion de Leyes, lib. vi. tit. 8. l. 1, 2. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. vii. c. 10.

‡ Herrera, dec. 1. lib. vii. c. 9. Gomara Hiſt. c. 78.

1509. New voyages.

ABOUT this period, Juan Diaz de Solis and Pinzon ſet out, in conjunction, upon a ſecond voyage. They ſtood directly ſouth, towards the equinoctial line, which Pinzon had formerly croſſed, and advanced as far as the fortieth degree of ſouthern latitude. They were aſtoniſhed to find that the continent of America ſtretched, on their right hand, through all this vaſt extent of ocean. They landed in different places, to take poſſeſſion in the name of their ſovereign; but though the country appeared to be extremely fertile and inviting, their force was ſo ſmall, having been fitted out rather for diſcovery than making ſettlements, that they left no colony behind them. Their voyage, ſerved, however, to give the Spaniards more exalted and adequate ideas with reſpect to the dimenſions of this new quarter of the globe *.

A ſettlement on the continent attempted.

THOUGH it was above ten years ſince Columbus had diſcovered the main land of America, the Spaniards had hitherto made no ſettlement in any part of it. What had been ſo long neglected was now ſeriouſly attempted, and with conſiderable vigour, though the plan for this purpoſe was neither formed by the crown, nor executed at the expence of the nation, but carried on by the enterpriſing ſpirit of private adventurers. This ſcheme took its riſe from Alonſo de Ojeda, who had already made two voyages as a diſcoverer, by which he acquired conſiderable reputation, but no wealth. But his character for intrepidity and conduct eaſily procured him aſſociates, who advanced the money requiſite to defray the charges of the expedition. About the ſame time, Diego de Nicueſſa, who had acquired a large fortune in Hiſpaniola, formed a ſimilar deſign. Ferdinand encouraged both; and though he

* Herrera, dec. 1. lib. vii. c. 9.

refuſed

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refuſed to advance the ſmalleſt ſum, was extremely liberal of titles and patents. He erected two governments on the continent, one extending from Cape de Vela to the gulf of Darien, and the other from that to Cape Gracias a Dios. The former was given to Ojeda, the latter to Nicueſſa. Ojeda fitted out a ſhip and two brigantines with three hundred men; Nicueſſa, ſix veſſels, with ſeven hundred and eighty men. They ſailed about the ſame time from St. Domingo for their reſpective governments. In order to give their title to thoſe countries ſome appearance of validity, ſeveral of the moſt eminent divines and lawyers in Spain were employed to preſcribe the mode in which they ſhould take poſſeſſion of them *. There is not in the hiſtory of mankind any thing more ſingular or extravagant than the form which they deviſed for this purpoſe. They inſtructed thoſe invaders, as ſoon as they landed on the continent, to declare to the natives the principal articles of the Chriſtian faith; to acquaint them, in particular, with the ſupreme juriſdiction of the Pope over all the kingdoms of the earth; to inform them of the grant which this holy pontiff had made of their country to the king of Spain; to require them to embrace the doctrines of that religion which they made known to them; and to ſubmit to the ſovereign whoſe authority they proclaimed. If they refuſed to comply with this requiſition, the terms of which muſt have been utterly incomprehenſible to an uninſtructed Indian, then Ojeda and Nicueſſa were authoriſed to attack them with ſword and fire; to reduce them, their wives and children, to a ſtate of ſervitude; and to compel them by force to recognize the juriſdiction of the church, and the authority of the monarch, to which they would not voluntarily ſubject themſelves †.

* Herrera, dec. 1. lib. vii. c. 15. † See NOTE XXIII.

As

As the inhabitants of the continent could not at once yield assent to doctrines too refined for their uncultivated understandings, and explained to them by interpreters imperfectly acquainted with their language; as they did not conceive how a foreign priest, of whom they had never heard, could have any right to dispose of their country, or how an unknown prince should claim jurisdiction over them as his subjects; they fiercely opposed the new invaders of their territories. Ojeda and Nicuessa endeavoured to effect by force what they could not accomplish by persuasion. The contemporary writers enter into a very minute detail in relating their transactions; but as they made no discovery of importance, nor established any permanent settlement, their adventures are not intitled to any considerable place in the general history of a period, where romantic valour, struggling with incredible hardships, distinguish every effort of the Spanish arms. They found the natives in those countries of which they went to assume the government, to be of a character very different from that of their countrymen in the islands. They were fierce and warlike. Their arrows were dipped in a poison so noxious, that every wound was followed with certain death. In one encounter they cut off above seventy of Ojeda's followers, and the Spaniards, for the first time, were taught to dread the inhabitants of the New World. Nicuessa was opposed by people equally resolute in defence of their possessions. Nothing could soften their ferocity. Though the Spaniards employed every art to soothe them, and to gain their confidence, they refused to hold any intercourse, or to exchange any friendly office, with men whose residence among them they considered as fatal to their liberty and independence. This implacable enmity of the natives, though it rendered it extremely difficult as well as dangerous

1509. The disasters attending it.

1510.

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to eſtabliſh a ſettlement in their country, might have been ſurmounted at length by the perſeverance of the Spaniards, by the ſuperiority of their arms, and their ſkill in the art of war. But every diſaſter which can be accumulated upon the unfortunate, combined to complete their ruin. The loſs of their ſhips by various accidents upon an unknown coaſt, the diſeaſes peculiar to a climate the moſt noxious in all America, the want of proviſions, unavoidable in a country imperfectly cultivated, diſſention among themſelves, and the inceſſant hoſtilities of the natives, involved them in a ſucceſſion of calamities, the bare recital of which ſtrikes one with horror. Though they received two conſiderable reinforcements from Hiſpaniola, the greater part of thoſe who had engaged in this unhappy expedition, periſhed, in leſs than a year, in the moſt extreme miſery. A few who ſurvived, ſettled as a feeble colony at Santa Maria el Antigua, on the gulf of Darien, under the command of Vaſco Nugnez de Balboa, who in the moſt deſperate exigencies, diſplayed ſuch courage and conduct, as firſt gained the confidence of his countrymen, and marked him out as their leader in more ſplendid and ſucceſsful undertakings. Nor was he the only adventurer in this expedition who will appear with luſtre in more important ſcenes. Francis Pizarro was one of Ojeda's companions, and in the ſchool of adverſity acquired or improved the talents which fitted him for the extraordinary actions which he afterwards performed. Ferdinand Cortes, whoſe name became ſtill more famous, had engaged early in this enterpriſe, which rouzed all the active youth of Hiſpaniola to arms; but the good fortune which accompanied him in his ſubſequent adventures, interpoſed to ſave him from the diſaſters to which his companions were expoſed. He was taken ill at St. Domingo

mingo before the departure of the fleet, and detained there by that indiſpoſition *.

1510. Conqueſt of Cuba.

NOTWITHSTANDING the unfortunate iſſue of this expedition, the Spaniards were not deterred from engaging in new ſchemes of a ſimilar nature. When wealth is acquired gradually by the perſevering hand of induſtry, or accumulated by the ſlow operations of regular commerce, the means employed are ſo proportioned to the end attained, that there is nothing to ſtrike the imagination, and little to urge upon the active powers of the mind to uncommon efforts. But when large fortunes were created almoſt inſtantaneouſly; when gold and pearls were procured in exchange for baubles; when the countries which produced theſe rich commodities, defended only by naked ſavages, might be ſeized by the firſt bold invader; objects ſo ſingular and alluring, rouzed a wonderful ſpirit of enterprize among the Spaniards, who ruſhed with ardour into this new path that was opened to wealth and diſtinction. While this ſpirit continued warm and vigorous, every attempt either towards diſcovery or conqueſt was applauded, and adventurers engaged in it with emulation. The paſſion for new undertakings, which characteriſes the age of diſcovery in the latter part of the 15th and beginning of the 16th century, would alone have been ſufficient to prevent the Spaniards from ſtopping ſhort in their career. But circumſtances peculiar to Hiſpaniola at this juncture concurred with it in extending their navigation and conqueſts. The vigorous treatment of the inhabitants of that iſland having almoſt extirpated the race, many of the Spaniſh planters, as I have al-

* Herrera, dec. 1. lib. vii. c. 11, &c. Gomara Hiſt. c. 57, 58, 59. Benzon. Hiſt. lib. i. c. 19---23. P. Martyr, decad. 122.

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ready obſerved, finding it impoſſible to carry on their works with the ſame vigour and profit, were obliged to look out for ſettlements in ſome country whoſe people were not yet waſted by oppreſſion. Others, with the inconſiderate levity natural to men upon whom wealth pours in with a ſudden flow, had ſquandered, in thoughtleſs prodigality, what they had acquired with eaſe, and were driven by neceſſity to embark in the moſt deſperate ſchemes, in order to retrieve their affairs. From all theſe cauſes, when Don Diego Columbus propoſed to conquer the iſland of Cuba, and to eſtabliſh a colony there, many perſons of chief diſtinction in Hiſpaniola engaged with alacrity in the meaſure. He gave the command of the troops deſtined for that ſervice to Diego Velaſquez, one of his father's companions in his ſecond voyage, and who, having been long ſettled in Hiſpaniola, had acquired an ample fortune, with ſuch reputation for probity and prudence, that he ſeemed to be well qualified for conducting an expedition of importance. Three hundred men were deemed ſufficient for the conqueſt of an iſland above ſeven hundred miles in length, and filled with inhabitants. But they were of the ſame unwarlike character with the people of Hiſpaniola. They were not only intimidated by the appearance of their new enemies, but unprepared to reſiſt them. For though, from the time that the Spaniards took poſſeſſion of the adjacent iſland, there was reaſon to expect a deſcent on their territories, none of the ſmall communities into which Cuba was divided, had either made any proviſion for its own defence, or had formed any concert for their common ſafety. The only obſtruction the Spaniards met with was from Hatuey, a cazique, who had fled from Hiſpaniola, and taken poſſeſſion of the eaſtern extremity of Cuba. He ſtood upon the defenſive at their firſt landing, and endeavoured to drive them back to their ſhips.

1510.

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His feeble troops, however, were ſoon broken and diſperſed; and he himſelf being taken priſoner, Velaſquez, according to the barbarous maxim of the Spaniards, conſidered him as a ſlave who had taken arms againſt his maſter, and condemned him to the flames. When Hatuey was faſtened to the ſtake, a Franciſcan friar labouring to convert him, promiſed him immediate admittance into the joys of heaven, if he would embrace the Chriſtian faith. "Are there any Spaniards," ſays he, after ſome pauſe, "in that region of bliſs which you deſcribe?" "Yes," replied the monk, "but only ſuch as are worthy and good." "The beſt of them," returned the indignant cazique, "have neither worth nor goodneſs; I will not go to a place where I may meet with one of that accurſed race" *. This dreadful example of vengeance ſtruck the people of Cuba with ſuch terror, that they ſcarcely gave any oppoſition to the progreſs of their invaders; and Velaſquez, without the loſs of a man, annexed this extenſive and fertile iſland to the Spaniſh monarchy †.

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THE facility with which this important conqueſt was completed, ſerved as an incitement to other undertakings. Juan Ponce de Leon, having acquired both fame and wealth by the reduction of Porto Rico, was impatient to engage in ſome new enterpriſe. He fitted out three ſhips at his own expence, for a voyage of diſcovery, and his reputation ſoon drew together a reſpectable body of followers. He directed his courſe towards the Lucayo iſlands; and after touching at ſeveral of them, as well as of the Bahama iſles, he ſtood to the ſouth-weſt, and diſcovered a country hitherto unknown

Diſcovery of Florida.

1512.

* B. de las Caſas, p. 40. † Herrera, dec. 1. lib. ix. c. 2, 3, &c. Oviedo, lib. xvii. c. 3. p. 179.

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1512. to the Spaniards, which he called Florida, either becauſe he felt in with it on Palm Sunday, or on account of its gay and beautiful appearance. He attempted to land in different places, but met with ſuch vigorous oppoſition from the natives, who were fierce and warlike, as convinced him that an increaſe of force was requiſite to effect a ſettlement. Satisfied with having opened a communication with a new country, of whoſe value and importance he conceived very ſanguine hopes, he return- to Porto Rico, through the channel now known by the name of the Gulf of Florida.

It was not merely the paſſion of ſearching for new countries that prompted Ponce de Leon to undertake this voyage, he was influenced by one of thoſe viſionary ideas which at that time often mingled with the ſpirit of diſcovery, and rendered it more enterpriſing. A tradition prevailed among the natives of Porto Rico, that in the iſle of Bimini, one of the Lucayos, there was a fountain of ſuch wonderful virtue as to renew the youth, and recall the vigour of every perſon who bathed in its ſalutary waters. In hopes of finding this grand reſtorative, Ponce de Leon and his followers ranged through the iſlands, ſearching, with fruitleſs ſolicitude and labour for the fountain, which was the chief object of their expedition. That a tale ſo fabulous ſhould gain credit among ſimple uninſtructed Indians is not ſurpriſing. That it ſhould make any impreſſion upon an enlightened people appears, in the preſent age, altogether incredible. The fact, however, is certain; and the moſt authentic Spaniſh hiſtorians mention this extravagant ſally of their credulous countrymen. The Spaniards, at that period, were engaged in a career of activity which gave a romantic turn to their imagination, and daily preſented to them ſtrange and marvellous objects.

1512.

objects. A New World was opened to their view. The visited islands and continents of whose existence mankind in former ages had no conception. In those delightful countries nature seemed to assume another form; every tree and plant and animal was different from those of the ancient hemisphere. They seemed to be transported to enchanted ground; and, after the wonders which they had seen, in the warmth and novelty of their admiration, nothing appeared to them so extraordinary as to be beyond belief. If the rapid succession of new and striking scenes made such impression even upon the sound understanding of Columbus, that he boasted of having found the seat of Paradise, it will not appear strange that Ponce de Leon should dream of discovering the fountain of youth *.

Progress of Balboa in Darien.

Soon after the expedition to Florida, a discovery of much greater importance was made in another part of America. Balboa having been raised to the government of the small colony at Santa Maria in Darien, by the voluntary suffrage of his associates, was so extremely desirous to obtain from the crown a confirmation of their election, that he dispatched one of his officers to Spain, in order to solicit a royal commission, which might invest him with a legal title to the supreme command. Conscious, however, that he could not expect success from the patronage of Ferdinand's ministers, with whom he was unconnected, or from negociating in a court to the arts of which he was a stranger, he endeavoured to merit the dignity to which he aspired, and aimed at performing some signal service that would secure him the preference to every

* P. Martyr, decad. p. 202. Ensayo Chronol. para la Hist. de la Florida, por D. Gab. Cardenas, p. 1. Oviedo, lib. xvi. c. 11. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. ix. c. 5. Hist. de la Conq. de la Florida, par Garc. de la Vega, lib. 1. c. 3.

competitor.

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competitor. Full of this idea, he made frequent inroads into the adjacent country, ſubdued ſeveral of the caziques, and collected a conſiderable quantity of gold, which abounded more in that part of the continent than in the iſlands. In one of thoſe excurſions, the Spaniards contended with ſuch eagerneſs about the diviſion of ſome gold, that they were at the point of proceeding to acts of violence againſt one another. A young cazique, who was preſent, aſtoniſhed at the high value which they ſet upon a thing of which he did not diſcern the uſe, tumbled the gold out of the balance with indignation; and, turning to the Spaniards, "Why do you quarrel (ſays he) about ſuch a trifle? If you are ſo paſſionately fond of gold, as to abandon your own country, and to diſturb the tranquility of diſtant nations for its ſake, I will conduct you to a region where the metal which ſeems to be the chief object of your admiration and deſire, is ſo common that the meaneſt utenſils are formed of it." Tranſported with what they heard, Balboa and his companions inquired eagerly where this happy country lay, and how they might arrive at it. He informed them that at the diſtance of ſix ſuns, that is of ſix days journey towards the ſouth, they ſhould diſcover another ocean, near to which this wealthy kingdom was ſituated; but if they intended to attack that powerful ſtate, they muſt aſſemble forces far ſuperior in number and ſtrength to thoſe with which they now appeared *.

The ſchemes which he forms.

THIS was the firſt information which the Spaniards received concerning the great ſouthern ocean, or the opulent and extenſive country known afterwards by the name of Peru. Balboa had now before him objects ſuited to his boundleſs ambition,

* Herrera, dec. 1. lib. ix. c. 2. Gomara, c. 60. P. Martyr, Decad. p. 149.

and

and the enterprising ardour of his genius. He immediately concluded the ocean which the Cazique mentioned, to be that for which Columbus had searched without success in this part of America, in hopes of opening a more direct communication with the East Indies, and he conjectured that the rich territory which had been described to him, must be part of that vast and opulent region of the earth. Elated with the idea of performing what so great a man had attempted in vain; and eager to accomplish a discovery which he knew would be no less acceptable to the king than beneficial to his country, he was impatient until he could set out upon this enterprize, in comparison of which all his former exploits appeared inconsiderable. But previous arrangement and preparation were requisite to ensure success. He began with courting and securing the friendship of the neighbouring Caziques. He sent some of his officers to Hispaniola, with a large quantity of gold, as a proof of his past successes, and an earnest of his future hopes. By a proper distribution of this, they secured the favour of the governor, and allured volunteers into the service. A considerable reinforcement from that island joined him, and he thought himself in a condition to attempt the discovery. 1512.

Difficulty of executing it.

THE isthmus of Darien is not above sixty miles in breadth, but this neck of land, which binds together the continents of North and South America, is strengthened by a chain of lofty mountains stretching thro' its whole extent, which render it a barrier of solidity sufficient to resist the impulse of two opposite oceans. The mountains are covered with forests almost inaccessible. The valleys in that moist climate, where it rains during two thirds of the year, are marshy, and so frequently overflowed, that the inhabitants find it necessary, in many places,

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ces, to build their houſes upon trees, in order to be elevated at ſome diſtance from the damp ſoil, and
1512. the odious reptiles ingendered in the putrid waters*. Large rivers ruſh down with an impetuous current from the high grounds. In a region thinly inhabited by wandering ſavages, the hand of induſtry had done nothing to mitigate or correct thoſe natural diſadvantages. To march acroſs this unexplored country, with no other guides but Indians, whoſe fidelity could be little truſted, was, all on theſe accounts, the boldeſt enterpriſe on which the Spaniards had hitherto ventured in the New World. But the intrepidity of Balboa was ſuch as diſtinguiſhed him among his countrymen, at a period when every
1513. adventurer was conſpicuous for daring courage. Nor was bravery his only merit, he was prudent in conduct, generous, affable, and poſſeſſed of thoſe popular talents which, in the moſt deſperate undertakings, inſpire confidence and ſecure attachment. Even after the junction of the volunteers from Hiſpaniola, he was able to muſter only an hundred and ninety men for his expedition. But they were hardy veterans, inured to the climate of America, and ready to follow him through every danger. A thouſand Indians attended them to carry their proviſions; and to complete their warlike array, they took with them ſeveral of thoſe fierce dogs, which were no leſs formidable than deſtructive to their naked enemies.

Diſcovers the South Sea.

BALBOA ſet out upon this important expedition on the firſt of September, about the time that the periodical rains began to abate. He proceeded by ſea, and without any difficulty, to the territories of a Cazique, whoſe friendſhip he had gained; but no ſooner did he begin to advance into the interior part

* P. Martyr, decad. p. 158.

of

of the country, than he was retarded by every obſtacle which he had reaſon to apprehend, from the nature of the territory, or the diſpoſition of its inhabitants. Some of the Caziques, at his approach, fled to the mountains with all their people, and carried off or deſtroyed whatever could afford ſubſiſtence to his troops. Others collected their ſubjects, in order to oppoſe his progreſs, and he quickly perceived what an arduous undertaking it was, to conduct ſuch a body of men through hoſtile nations, acroſs ſwamps and rivers, and woods, which had never been paſſed but by ſtraggling Indians. But by ſharing in every hardſhip with the meaneſt ſoldier, by appearing the foremoſt to meet every danger, by promiſing confidently to his troops the enjoyment of honour and riches ſuperior to the moſt ſucceſsful of his countrymen, he inſpired them with ſuch enthuſiaſtic reſolution, that they followed him without murmuring. When they had penetrated a good way into the mountains, a powerful Cazique appeared in a narrow paſs, with a numerous body of his ſubjects to obſtruct their progreſs. But men who had ſurmounted ſo many obſtacles, deſpiſed the oppoſition of ſuch feeble enemies. They attacked them with impetuoſity, and having diſperſed them with much eaſe and great ſlaughter, continued their march. Though their guides had repreſented the breadth of the iſthmus to be only a journey of ſix days, they had already ſpent twenty-five in forcing their way through the woods and mountains. Many of them were ready to ſink under ſuch uninterrupted fatigue in that ſultry climate, ſeveral were ſeized with the diſeaſes peculiar to the country, and all became impatient to reach the period of their labours and ſufferings. At length the Indians aſſured them, that, from the top

of

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1513. of the next mountain they ſhould diſcover the ocean which was the object of their wiſhes. When, with infinite toil, they had climbed up the greater part of that deep aſcent, Balboa commanded his men to halt, and advanced alone to the ſummit, that he might be the firſt who ſhould enjoy a ſpectacle which he had ſo long deſired. As ſoon as he beheld the South Sea ſtretching in endleſs proſpect below him, he fell on his knees, and, lifting up his hands to Heaven, returned thanks to God, who had conducted him to a diſcovery ſo beneficial to his country, and ſo honourable to himſelf. His followers, obſerving his tranſports of joy, ruſhed forward to join in his wonder, exultation and gratitude. They held on their courſe to the ſhore with great alacrity, when, Balboa advancing up to the middle in the waves with his buckler and ſword, took poſſeſſion of that ocean in the name of the king his maſter, and vowed to defend it, with theſe arms, againſt all his enemies *.

THAT part of the great Pacific or Southern ocean which Balboa firſt diſcoverd, ſtill retains the name of the Gulph of St. Michael, which he gave to it, and is ſituated to the eaſt of Panama. From ſeveral of the petty princes, who governed in the diſtricts adjacent to that gulf, he extorted proviſions and gold by force of arms. Others ſent them to him voluntarily. To theſe acceptable preſents, ſome of the Caziques added a conſiderable quantity of pearls; and he learned from them, with much ſatisfaction, that pearl oyſters abounded in the ſea which he had newly diſcovered.

* Herrera, dec. 1. lib. x. c. 1, &c. Gomara, c. 62, &c. P. Martyr. decad. p. 205, &c.

TOGETHER

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TOGETHER with the acquiſition of this wealth, which ſerved to ſoothe and encourage his followers, he received accounts which confirmed his ſanguine hopes of future and more extenſive benefits from the expedition. All the people on the coaſt of the South Sea, concurred in informing him that there was a mighty and opulent kingdom ſituated at a conſiderable diſtance towards the eaſt, the inhabitants of which had tame animals to carry their burdens. In order to give him an idea of theſe, they drew upon the ſand the figure of the Llamas or ſheep, afterwards found in Peru, which the Peruvians had taught to perform ſuch ſervices as they deſcribed. As the Llama, in its form, nearly reſembles a camel, a beaſt of burden deemed peculiar to Aſia, this circumſtance, in conjunction with the diſcovery of the pearls, another noted production of that country, tended to confirm the Spaniards in their miſtaken theory with reſpect to the vicinity of the New World to the Eaſt Indies *.

He receives information concerning a more opulent country.

BUT though the information which Balboa received from the people on the coaſt, as well as his own conjectures and hopes, rendered him extremely impatient to viſit this unknown country, his prudence reſtrained him from attempting to invade it with an handful of men, exhauſted by fatigue, and weakened by diſeaſes †. He determined to lead back his followers, at preſent, to their ſettlement at Santa Maria in Darien, and to return next ſeaſon with a force more adequate to ſuch an arduous enterprize. In order to acquire a more extenſive knowledge of the iſthmus, he marched back by a different route, which he found to be no leſs dangerous and difficult than that which he had formerly taken. But to men elated with ſucceſs, and ani-

Obliged to return.

* Herrera, dec. 1. lib. x. c. 2. † See NOTE XXIV.

mated

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mated with hope, nothing is unſurmountable. Balboa returned to Santa Maria, from which he had been abſent four months, with greater glory, and more treaſure, than the Spaniards had acquired in any expedition in the New World. None of Balboa's officers diſtinguiſhed himſelf more in this ſervice than Franciſco Pizarro, or aſſiſted with greater courage and ardour in opening a communication with thoſe countries, in which he afterwards acted ſuch an illuſtrious part *.

Pedrarias appointed governor of Darien.

BALBOA's firſt care was to ſend information to Spain of the important diſcovery which he had made; and to demand a reinforcement of a thouſand men, in order to attempt the conqueſt of that opulent country, concerning which he had received ſuch inviting intelligence. The firſt account of the diſcovery of the New World hardly occaſioned greater joy than the unexpected tidings, that a paſſage was at laſt found to the great ſouthern ocean. The communication with the Eaſt Indies, by a courſe to the weſtward of the line of debarkation, drawn by the Pope, ſeemed now to be certain. The vaſt wealth which flowed into Portugal from its ſettlements and conqueſts in that country, excited the envy and called forth the emulation of other ſtates. Ferdinand hoped now to come in for a ſhare in this lucrative commerce, and in his eagerneſs to obtain it, was willing to make an effort beyond what Balboa required. But even in this exertion, his jealous policy, as well as the fatal antipathy of Fonſeca, now biſhop of Burgos, to every man of merit who diſtinguiſhed himſelf in the New World, were conſpicuous. Notwithſtanding Balboa's recent ſervices, which marked him out as the moſt proper perſon to finiſh that great

* Herrera, dec. 1. lib. x. c. 3.---6. Gomara, c. 64. P. Martyr, dec. p. 299, &c.

undertaking

undertaking which he had begun, Ferdinand was so ungenerous as to overlook these, and to appoint Pedrarias Davila governor of Darien. He gave him the command of fifteen stout vessels, and twelve hundred soldiers. These were fitted out at the public expence, with a liberality which Ferdinand had never displayed in any former armament destined for the New World; and such was the ardour of the Spanish gentlemen to follow a leader who was about to conduct them to a country, where, as fame reported, they had only to throw their nets into the sea, and draw out gold*, that fifteen hundred embarked on board the fleet, and if they had not been restrained, a much greater number would have engaged in the service †. 1514.

Pedrarias reached the gulph of Darien without any remarkable accident, and immediately sent some of his principal officers ashore, to inform Balboa of his arrival, with the king's commission, to be governor of the colony. To their astonishment, they found Balboa, of whose great exploits they had heard so much, and of whose opulence they had formed such high ideas, clad in a canvas jacket, with shoes made of packthread, employed, together with some Indians, in thatching his own hut with reeds. Even in this simple garb, which corresponded so ill with the expectations and wishes of his new guests, Balboa received them with dignity. The fame of his discoveries had drawn so many adventurers from the islands, that he could now muster four hundred and fifty men. At the head of those daring veterants, he was more than a match for the forces which Pedrarias brought with him. But though his troops murmured loudly at the injustice of the king in superseding their

* Herrera, dec. 1. lib, x. c. 14. † Ibid. dec. 1. lib. x. c. 6. 7. P. Martyr, dec. p. 177, 256.

commander,

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commander, and complained that ſtrangers would now reap the fruits of their toil and ſucceſs, Balboa ſubmitted with implicit obedience to the will of his ſovereign, and received Pedrarias with all the deference due to his character*.

Diſſention between him and Balboa.

NOTWITHSTANDING this moderation of Balboa, to which Pedrarias owed the peaceable poſſeſſion of his government, he appointed a judicial inquiry to be made into his conduct while under the command of Nicueſſa and Enciſo, and impoſed a conſiderable fine upon him, on account of the irregularities of which he had then been guilty. Balboa felt ſenſibly the mortification of being ſubjected to trial and to puniſhment in a place where he had ſo lately occupied the firſt ſtation. Pedrarias could not conceal his jealouſy of his ſuperior merit; ſo that the reſentment of the one, and the envy of the other, gave riſe to diſſentions extremely detrimental to the colony. It was threatened with a calamity ſtill more fatal. Pedrarias had

July.

landed in Darien at a moſt unlucky time of the year, about the middle of the rainy ſeaſon, in that part of the torrid zone where the clouds pour down ſuch torrents as are unknown in more temperate climates*. The village of Santa Maria was ſeated in a rich plain, environed with marſhes and woods. The conſtitution of Europeans was unable to withſtand the peſtilential influence of ſuch a ſituation, in a climate naturally ſo noxious, and at a ſeaſon ſo peculiarly unhealthy. A violent and deſtructive malady carried off many of the ſoldiers who accompanied Pedrarias. An extreme ſcarcity of proviſions augmented this diſtreſs, as it rendered it impoſſible to find proper refreſhment for the

* Herrera, dec. 1. lib. x. c. 13, 14. † Richard Hiſt. Naturelle de l'Air. tom. i. p. 204.

ſick.

ſick, or the neceſſary ſuſtenance for the healthy *. In the ſpace of a month, above ſix hundred perſons periſhed in the utmoſt miſery. Dejection and deſpair ſpread through the colony. Many principal perſons ſolicited their diſmiſſion, and were glad to relinquiſh all their hopes of wealth, in order to eſcape from that pernicious region. Pedrarias endeavoured to divert thoſe who remained from broding over their misfortunes, by finding them employment. With this view, he ſent ſeveral detachments into the interior parts of the country, to levy gold among the natives, and to ſearch for the mines in which it was produced. Thoſe rapacious adventurers, more attentive to preſent gain than to the means of facilitating their future progreſs, plundered without diſtinction wherever they marched. Regardleſs of the alliances which Balboa had made with ſeveral of the caziques, they ſtripped them of every thing valuable, and treated them, as well as their ſubjects, with the utmoſt inſolence and cruelty. By their tyranny and exactions, which Pedrarias, either from want of authority or of inclination, did not reſtrain, all the country from the gulf of Darien to the lake of Nicaragua was deſolated, and the Spaniards were inconſiderately deprived of the advantages which they might have derived from the friendſhip of the natives, in extending their conqueſts to the South Sea. Balboa, who ſaw with concern that ſuch ill-judged proceedings retarded the execution of his favourite ſcheme, ſent violent remonſtrances to Spain againſt the imprudent government of Pedrarias, which had ruined a happy and flouriſhing colony. Pedrarias, on the other hand, accuſed him of having deceived the king,

* Herrera, dec. 1. lib. x. c. 14. P. Martyr, dec. p. 272.

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by magnifying his own exploits, as well as by a falſe repreſentation of the opulence and value of the country *.

1514. Violent proceedings againſt Balboa.

FERDINAND became ſenſible at length of his imprudence in ſuperſeding the moſt active and experienced officer he had in the New world, and, by way of compenſation to Balboa, appointed him *Adelantado*, or Lieutenant-governor of the countries upon the South Sea, with very extenſive privileges and authority. At the ſame time he enjoined Pedrarias to ſupport Balboa in all his enterpriſes, and to conſult with him concerning every meaſure which he himſelf purſued. But to effect ſuch a ſudden tranſition from inveterate enmity to perfect confidence, exceeded Ferdinand's power. Pedrarias continued to treat his rival with neglect; and Balboa's fortune being exhauſted by the payment of his fine, and other exactions of Pedrarias, he could not make ſuitable preparations for taking poſſeſſion of his new government. At length, by the interpoſition and exhortations of the biſhop of Darien, they were brought to a reconciliation; and, in order to cement this union more firmly, Pedrarias agreed to give his daughter in marriage to Balboa. The firſt effect of their concord was, that Balboa was permitted to make ſeveral ſmall incurſions into the country. Theſe he conducted with ſuch prudence, as added to the reputation which he had already acquired. Many adventurers reſorted to him, and, with the countenance and ſupport of Pedrarias, he began to prepare for his expedition to the South Sea. In order to accompliſh this, it was neceſſary to build veſſels capable of conveying his troops to thoſe provinces which he purpoſed to

1515.

1516.

* Herrera, dec. 1. lib. x. c. 15. dec. 2. c. 1, &c. Gomara, c. 66. P. Martyr, dec. 3. c. 10. Relacion de B. de las Caſas, p. 12.

invade.

invade. After ſurmounting many obſtacles, and enduring a variety of thoſe hardſhips which were the portion of the conquerors of America, he at length finiſhed four ſmall brigantines. In theſe, with three hundred choſen men (a force ſuperior to that with which Pizarro afterwards undertook the ſame expedition), he was ready to ſail towards Peru, when he received an unexpected meſſage from Pedrarias *. As his reconciliation with Balboa had never been cordial, the progreſs which he made revived his ancient enmity, and added to its rancour. He dreaded the proſperity and elevation of a man whom he had injured ſo deeply. He ſuſpected that ſucceſs would encourage him to aim at independence upon his juriſdiction; and ſo violently did the paſſions of hatred, fear, and jealouſy, operate upon his mind, that, in order to gratify his vengeance, he ſcrupled not to defeat an enterpriſe of the greateſt moment to his country. Under pretexts which were falſe, but plauſible, he deſired Balboa to poſtpone his voyage for a ſhort time, and to repair to Acla, in order that he might have an interview with him. Balboa, with the unſuſpicious confidence of a man conſcious of no crime, inſtantly obeyed the ſummons; but as ſoon as he entered the place, he was arreſted by order of Pedrarias, whoſe impatience to ſatiate his revenge did not ſuffer him to languiſh long in confinement. Judges were immediately appointed to proceed to his trial. An accuſation of diſloyalty to the king, and of an intention to revolt againſt the governor, was preferred againſt him. Sentence of death was pronounced; and though the judges who paſſed it, ſeconded by the whole colony, interceded warmly for his pardon, Pedrarias continued inexorable; and, to their aſtoniſhment and ſorrow, the Spa-

* Herrera, dec. 2. lib. i. c. 3. Lib. ii. c. 11. 13. 21.

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niards beheld the public execution of a man whom they univerſally deemed more capable than any who had borne command in America, of forming and accompliſhing great deſigns *. Upon his death, the expedition which he had planned was relinquiſhed. Pedrarias, notwithſtanding the violence and injuſtice of his proceedings, was not only ſcreened from puniſhment by the powerful patronage of the biſhop of Burgos and other courtiers, but continued in power. Soon after, he obtained permiſſion to remove the colony from its unhealthy ſtation at Santa Maria to Panama, on the oppoſite ſide of the iſthmus; and though it did not gain much in point of healthfulneſs by the change, the commodious ſituation of this new ſettlement contributed greatly to facilitate the ſubſequent conqueſts of the Spaniards in the vaſt countries ſituated upon the Southern Ocean †.

1517.

1515. New diſcoveries.

During theſe tranſactions in Darien, the hiſtory of which it was proper to carry on in an uninterrupted tenour, ſeveral important events occurred with reſpect to the diſcovery, the conqueſt, and government of other provinces in the New world. Ferdinand was ſo intent upon opening a communication with the Molucca or Spice iſlands by the weſt, that, in the year one thouſand five hundred and fifteen, he fitted out two ſhips at his own expence, in order to attempt ſuch a voyage, and gave the command of them to Juan Diaz de Solis, who was deemed the moſt ſkilful navigator in Spain. He ſtood along the coaſt of South America, and on the firſt of January one thouſand five hundred and ſixteen, entered a river, which he called Janeiro, where an extenſive commerce is now carried on. From thence he proceeded to a ſpacious bay, which he ſuppoſed to be the entrance into a ſtrait that communicated with the Indian

* Herrera, dec. 2. lib. ii. c. 21, 22. † Ibid. lib. iv. c. 1.

ocean;

ocean; but upon advancing farther, he found it to be the mouth of Rio de Plata, one of the vaſt rivers by which the ſouthern continent of America is watered. In endeavouring to make a deſcent in this country, De Solis and ſeveral of his crew were ſlain by the natives, who, in ſight of the ſhips, cut their bodies in pieces, roaſted and devoured them. Diſcouraged with the loſs of their commander, and terrified at this ſhocking ſpectacle, the ſurviving Spaniards ſet ſail for Europe, without aiming at any farther diſcovery *. Though this attempt proved abortive, it was not without benefit. It turned the attention of ingenious men to this courſe of navigation, and prepared the way for a more fortunate voyage, in which, a few years poſterior to this period, the great deſign that Ferdinand had in view was accompliſhed. 1517.

State of the colony in Hiſpaniola.

THOUGH the Spaniards were thus actively employed in extending their diſcoveries and ſettlements in America, they ſtill conſidered Hiſpaniola as their principal colony, and ſeat of government. Don Diego Columbus wanted neither inclination nor abilities to have rendered the members of this colony, who were moſt immediately under his juriſdiction, proſperous and happy. But he was circumſcribed in all his operations, by the ſuſpicious policy of Ferdinand, who on every occaſion, and under pretexts the moſt frivolous, retrenched his privileges, and encouraged the treaſurer, the judges, and other ſubordinate officers, to counteract his meaſures, and to diſpute his authority. The moſt valuable prerogative which the governor poſſeſſed, was that of diſtributing Indians among the Spaniards ſettled in the iſland. The rigorous ſervitude of thoſe unhappy men having been but little mitigated by all the regulations in

* Herrera, dec. 2. lib. i. c. 7. P. Martyr, decad p. 317.

their

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1517. their favour, the power of parcelling out ſuch neceſſary inſtruments of labour at pleaſure, ſecured to the governor great influence in the colony. In order to ſtrip him of this, Ferdinand created a new office, with the power of diſtributing the Indians, and beſtowed it upon Rodrigo Albuquerque, a relation of Zapata, his confidential miniſter. Mortified with the injuſtice, as well as indignity, of this invaſion upon his rights, in a point ſo eſſential, Don Diego could no longer remain in a place where his power and conſequence were almoſt annihilated. He repaired to Spain with the vain hopes of obtaining redreſs*. Albuquerque entered upon his office with all the rapacity of an indigent adventurer, impatient to amaſs wealth. He began with taking the exact number of Indians in the iſland, and found that from ſixty thouſand, who, in the year one thouſand five hundred and eight, ſurvived after all their ſufferings, they were now reduced to fourteen thouſand. Theſe he threw into ſeparate diviſions or lots, and beſtowed them upon ſuch as were willing to purchaſe them at the higheſt price. By this arbitrary diſtribution, ſeveral of the natives were removed from their original habitations, many were taken from their ancient maſters, and all of them ſubjected to heavier burdens, and to more intolerable labour, in order to reimburſe their new proprietors. Thoſe additional calamities completed the miſery, and haſtened to the extinction of this wretched and innocent race of men †.

Controverſy with reſpect to the treatment of the Indians.

THE violence of theſe proceedings, together with the fatal conſequences which attended them, not only excited complaints among ſuch as thought themſelves aggrieved, but touched the hearts of

* Herrera dec. 1. lib. ix. c. 5. lib. x. c. 12. † Ibid. dec. 1. lib. x. c. 12.

all

all who retained any ſentiments of humanity. From the time that eccleſiaſtics were ſent into America to inſtruct and convert the natives, they perceived that the rigour with which the Spaniards treated them, rendered their miniſtry altogether fruitleſs. The miſſionaries, in conformity to the mild ſpirit of that religion which they were employed to publiſh, early remonſtrated againſt the maxims of their countrymen with reſpect to the Americans, and condemned the *repartimientos*, or *diſtributions*, by which they were given up as ſlaves to their conquerors, as no leſs contrary to natural juſtice and the precepts of Chriſtianity, than to ſound policy. The Dominicans, to whom the inſtruction of the Americans was originally committed, were moſt vehement in teſtifying againſt the *repartimientos*. In the year one thouſand five hundred and eleven, Monteſino, one of their moſt eminent preachers, inveighed againſt this practice in the great church at St. Domingo, with all the impetuoſity of popular eloquence. Don Diego Columbus, the principal officers of the colony, and all the laymen who had been his hearers, complained of the monk to his ſuperiors; but they, inſtead of condemning, applauded his doctrine, as equally pious and ſeaſonable. The Franciſcans, influenced by the ſpirit of oppoſition and rivalſhip which ſubſiſts between the two orders, diſcovered ſome inclination to take part with the laity, and to eſpouſe the defence of the *repartimientos*. But as they could not with decency give their avowed approbation to a ſyſtem of oppreſſion, ſo repugnant to the ſpirit of religion, they endeavoured to palliate what they could not juſtify, and alleged, in excuſe for the conduct of their countrymen, that it was impoſſible to carry on any improvement in the colony, unleſs the Spaniards poſſeſſed ſuch dominion

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minion over the natives, that they could compel them to labour *.

1517. Contrary decisions concerning this point.

THE Dominicans, regardless of such political and interested considerations, would not relax in any degree the rigour of their sentiments, and even refused to absolve, or admit to the sacraments, such of their countrymen as held the natives in servitude †. Both parties applied to the king for his decision in a matter of such importance. Ferdinand empowered a committee of his privy-council, assisted by some of the most eminent civilians and divines in Spain, to hear the deputies sent from Hispaniola, in support of their respective opinions. After a long discussion, the speculative point in controversy was determined in favour of the Dominicans, the Indians were declared to be a free people, intitled to all the natural rights of men; but, notwithstanding this decision, the *repartimientos* were continued upon their ancient footing ‡. As this determination admitted the principle upon which the Dominicans founded their opinion, it was not calculated either to silence or to convince them. At length, in order to quiet the colony, which was alarmed by their remonstrances and censures, Ferdinand issued a decree of his privy-council, declaring, that after mature consideration of the Apostolic
1513. Bull, and other titles by which the crown of Castile claimed a right to its possessions in the New world, the servitude of the Indians was warranted both by the laws of God and of man; that unless they were subjected to the dominion of the Spaniards, and compelled to reside under their inspection, it would be impossible to reclaim

* Herrera, dec. 1. lib. viii. c. 11. Oviedo, lib. iii. c. 6. p. 97. † Oviedo, ibid. ‡ Herrera, dec. 1. lib. viii. c. 12. lib. ix. c. 5.

them

them from idolatry, or to inſtruct them in the principles of the Chriſtian faith; that no farther ſcruple ought to be entertained concerning the lawfulneſs of the *repartimientos*, as the king and council were willing to take the charge of that upon their own conſciences; and that therefore the Dominicans, and monks of other religious orders, ſhould abſtain, for the future, from thoſe invectives, which, from an exceſs of charitable, but ill-informed zeal, they had uttered againſt that practice *. 1517.

THAT his intention of adhering to this decree might be fully underſtood, Ferdinand conferred new grants of Indians upon ſeveral of his courtiers ‡. But, in order that he might not ſeem altogether inattentive to the rights of humanity, he publiſhed an edict, in which he endeavoured to provide for the mild treatment of the Indians under the yoke to which he ſubjected them; he regulated the nature of the work which they ſhould be required to perform, he preſcribed the mode in which they ſhould be clothed and fed, and gave directions with reſpect to their inſtruction in the principles of Chriſtianity §.

BUT the Dominicans, who, from their experience of what was paſt, judged concerning the future, ſoon perceived the inefficacy of thoſe proviſions, and foretold, that as long as it was the intereſt of individuals to treat the Indians with rigour, no public regulations could render their ſervitude mild or tolerable. They conſidered it as vain to waſte their own time and ſtrength in attempting to communicate the ſublime truths of religion to men, whoſe ſpirits were broken, and their faculEffect of theſe.

* Herrera, dec. 1. lib. ix. c. 14. ‡ See NOTE XXV.
§ Herrera, ibid.

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ties impaired by oppreſſion. Some of them, in deſpair, requeſted the permiſſion of their ſuperiors to remove to the continent, and to purſue the object of their miſſion among ſuch of the natives as were not hitherto corrupted by the example of the Spaniards, or alienated by their cruelty from the Chriſtian faith. Such as remained in Hiſpaniola continued to remonſtrate, with decent firmneſs, againſt the ſervitude of the Indians *.

Bartholomew de las Caſas appears in defence of the Indians.

THE violent operations of Albuquerque, the new diſtributor of Indians, revived the zeal of the Dominicans againſt the *repartimientos*, and called forth an advocate for that oppreſſed people, who poſſeſſed all the courage, the talents, and activity requiſite in ſupporting ſuch a deſperate cauſe. This was Bartholomew de las Caſas, a native of Seville, and one of the clergymen ſent out with Columbus in his ſecond voyage to Hiſpaniola, in order to ſettle in that iſland. He early adopted the opinion prevalent among eccleſiaſtics, with reſpect to the unlawfulneſs of reducing the natives to ſervitude; and that he might demonſtrate the ſincerity of his conviction, he relinquiſhed all the Indians who had fallen to his own ſhare in the diviſion of the inhabitants among their conquerors, declaring that he ſhould ever bewail his own misfortune and guilt, in having exerciſed for a moment this impious dominion over his fellow creatures †. From that time, he was the avowed patron of the Indians; and, by his bold interpoſitions in their behalf, as well as by the reſpect due to his abilities and character, he had often the merit of ſetting ſome bounds to the exceſſes of his countrymen. He did not fail to remonſtrate

* Herrera, dec. 1. lib. ix. c. 14. Touron. Hiſt. Gener. de l'Amerique, tom. i. p. 252. † Fr. Aug. Davila Padilla Hiſt. de la Fundacion de la Provincia de St. Jago de Mexico, p. 303, 304. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. x. c. 12.

warmly

warmly againſt the proceedings of Albuquerque; and, though he ſoon found that attention to his own intereſt rendered him deaf to admonition, he did not abandon the wretched people whoſe cauſe he had eſpouſed. He inſtantly ſet out for Spain, with the moſt ſanguine hopes of opening the eyes and ſoftening the heart of Ferdinand, by that ſtriking picture of the oppreſſion of his new ſubjects, which he would exhibit to his view *.

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1516. Solicits their cauſe in the court of Spain.

He eaſily obtained admittance to the king, whom he found in a declining ſtate of health. With much freedom, and no leſs eloquence, he repreſented to him all the fatal effects of the *repartimientos* in the New World, boldly charging him with the guilt of having authoriſed this impious meaſure, which had brought miſery and deſtruction upon a numerous and innocent race of men, whom Providence had placed under his protection. Ferdinand, whoſe mind as well as body was much enfeebled by his diſtemper, was greatly alarmed at this charge of impiety, which at another juncture he would have deſpiſed. He liſtened with deep compunction to the diſcourſe of Las Caſas, and promiſed to take into attentive conſideration the means of redreſſing the evil of which he complained. But death prevented him from executing his reſolution. Charles of Auſtria, to whom all his crowns devolved, reſided at that time in his paternal dominions in the Low Countries. Las Caſas, with his uſual ardour, prepared immediately to ſet out for Flanders, in order to occupy the ear of the young monarch, when cardinal Ximenes, who, as regent, aſſumed the reins of government in Caſtile, commanded him to deſiſt from the journey, and engaged to hear his complaints in perſon.

† Herrera, dec. 1. lib. x. c. 12. Dec. 2. lib. i. c. 11. Davila Padilla Hiſt. p. 304.

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BOOK III.

1517. The regulations of Cardinal Ximenes.

He accordingly weighed the matter with attention equal to its importance; and as his impetuous mind delighted in ſchemes bold and uncommon, he ſoon fixed upon a plan which aſtoniſhed the miniſters trained up under the formal and cautious adminiſtration of Ferdinand. Without regarding either the rights of Don Diego Columbus, or the regulations eſtabliſhed by the late king, he reſolved to ſend three perſons to America, as ſuperintendents of all the colonies there, with authority, after examining all circumſtances on the ſpot, to decide finally with reſpect to the point in queſtion. It was a matter of deliberation and delicacy to chuſe men qualified for ſuch an important ſtation. As all the laymen ſettled in America, or who had been conſulted in the adminiſtration of that department, had given their opinion that the Spaniards could not keep poſſeſſion of their new ſettlements, unleſs they were allowed to retain their dominion over the Indians, he ſaw that he could not rely on their impartiality, and determined to commit the truſt to eccleſiaſtics. As the Dominicans and Franciſcans had already eſpouſed oppoſite ſides in the controverſy, he, from the ſame principle, excluded both theſe fraternities from the commiſſion. He confined his choice to the monks of St. Jerome, a ſmall, but reſpectable order in Spain. With the aſſiſtance of their general, and in concert with Las Caſas, he ſoon pitched upon three perſons whom he deemed equal to the charge. To them he joined Zuazo, a private lawyer of diſtinguiſhed probity, with unbounded power to regulate all judicial proceedings in the colonies. Las Caſas was appointed to accompany them, with the title of Protector of the Indians*.

* Herrera, dec. 2. lib. ii. c. 3.

To

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To veſt ſuch extraordinary powers as might at once overturn the ſyſtem of government eſtabliſhed in the New World in four perſons, who, from their humble condition in life, were little intitled to poſſeſs this high authority, appeared to Zapata, and other miniſters of the late king, a meaſure ſo wild and dangerous, that they refuſed to iſſue the diſpatches neceſſary for carrying it into execution. But Ximenes was not of a temper patiently to brook oppoſition to any of his ſchemes. He ſent for the refractory miniſters, and addreſſed them in ſuch a tone, that in the utmoſt conſternation they obeyed his orders*. The ſuperintendents, with their aſſociate Zuazo, and Las Caſas, ſailed for St. Domingo. Upon their arrival, the firſt act of their authority was to ſet at liberty all the Indians who had been granted to the Spaniſh courtiers, or to any perſon not reſiding in America. This, together with the information which had been received from Spain concerning the object of the commiſſion, ſpread a general alarm. The colonies concluded that they were to be deprived at once of the hands with which they carried on their labour, and that, of conſequence, ruin was unavoidable. But the fathers of St. Jerome proceeded with ſuch caution and prudence, as ſoon diſſipated all their fears. They diſcovered, in every ſtep of their conduct, a knowledge of the world, and of affairs, which is ſeldom acquired in a cloiſter; and diſplayed a moderation and gentleneſs ſtill more rare, among perſons trained up in the ſolitude and auſterity of a monaſtic life. Their ears were open to information from every quarter, they compared the different accounts which they received, and, after mature conſideration of the whole, they were fully ſatisfied that the ſtate of the colony rendered it impoſſi-

The manner in which they were executed.

* Herrera, dec 2. lib. ii. c. 6.

ble

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1517.

ble to adopt the plan propoſed by Las Caſas, and recommended by the cardinal. They plainly perceived that the Spaniards ſettled in America were ſo few in number, that they could neither work the mines which had been opened, nor cultivate the country; that they depended for both upon the labour of the natives, and if deprived of it, they muſt inſtantly relinquiſh their conqueſts, or give up all the advantages which they derived from them; that no allurement was ſo powerful as to ſurmount the natural averſion of the Indians to any laborious effort, and that nothing but the authority of a maſter could compel them to work; and if they were not kept conſtantly under the eye and diſcipline of a ſuperior, ſo great was their natural liſtleſſneſs and indifference, that they would neither attend to religious inſtruction, nor obſerve thoſe rites of Chriſtianity which they had been already taught. Upon all thoſe accounts, they found it neceſſary to tolerate the *repartimientos*, and to ſuffer the Indians to remain under ſubjection to their Spaniſh maſters. They uſed their utmoſt endeavours, however, to prevent the fatal effects of this eſtabliſhment, and to ſecure the Indians the conſolation of the beſt treatment compatible with a ſtate of ſervitude. For this purpoſe, they revived former regulations, they preſcribed new ones, they neglected no circumſtance that tended to mitigate the rigour of the yoke; and, by their authority, their example, and their exhortations, they laboured to inſpire their countrymen with ſentiments of equity and gentleneſs towards the unhappy people upon whoſe induſtry they depended. Zuazo, in his department ſeconded the endeavours of the ſuperintendents. He reformed the courts of juſtice, in ſuch a manner as to render their deciſions equitable as well as expeditious, and introduced various regulations which greatly improved the interior police

police of the colony. The ſatisfaction with his conduct, and that of the ſuperintendents, was now univerſal among the Spaniards ſettled in the New World, and all admired the boldneſs of Ximenes, in having departed from the ordinary path of buſineſs in forming his plan, as well as his ſagacity in pitching upon perſons, whoſe wiſdom, moderation and diſintereſtedneſs rendered them worthy of this high truſt *. BOOK III. 1517.

Las Caſas diſſatisfied with them.

Las Casas alone was diſſatisfied. The prudential conſiderations which influenced the ſuperintendents, made no impreſſion upon him. He regarded their idea of accommodating their conduct to the ſtate of the colony, as the maxim of an unhallowed timid policy, which tolerated what was unjuſt, becauſe it was beneficial. He contended, that the Indians were by nature free, and, as their protector, he required the ſuperintendents not to bereave hem of the common privilege of humanity. They received his moſt vehement remonſtrances without emotion, but adhered firmly to their own ſyſtem. The Spaniſh planters did not bear with him ſo patiently, and were ready to tear him in pieces for inſiſting in a requiſition ſo odious to them. Las Caſas, in order to ſcreen himſelf from their rage, found it neceſſary to take ſhelter in a convent; and perceiving that all his efforts in America were fruitleſs, he ſoon ſet out for Europe, with a fixed reſolution not to abandon the protection of a people whom he deemed to be cruelly oppreſſed*.

His negociations with the miniſters of Charles V.

Had Ximenes retained that vigour of mind with which he uſually applied to buſineſs, Las Caſas muſt have met with no very gracious re-

* Herrera, dec. 2. lib. ii. c. 15. Remeſal. Hiſt. Gener. lib. 2. c. 14, 15, 16. * Herrera, dec. 2. lib. ii. c. 16.

ception

BOOK III.

1517. ception upon his return to Spain. But he found the cardinal languiſhing under a mortal diſtemper, and preparing to reſign his authority to the young king, who was daily expected from the Low Countries. Charles arrived, took poſſeſſion of the government, and, by the death of Ximenes, loſt a miniſter, whoſe abilities and integrity intitled him to direct his affairs. Many of the Flemiſh nobility had accompanied their ſovereign to Spain. From that warm predilection to his countrymen, which was natural at his age, he conſulted them with reſpect to all the tranſactions in his new kingdom, and they, with an indiſcreet eagerneſs, intruded themſelves into every buſineſs, and ſeized almoſt every department of adminiſtration*. The direction of American affairs was an object too alluring to eſcape their attention. Las Caſas obſerved their growing influence, and though projectors are uſually too ſanguine, to conduct their ſchemes with much dexterity, he poſſeſſed a buſtling indefatigable activity, which ſometimes accompliſhes its purpoſes with greater ſucceſs, than the moſt exquiſite diſcernment and addreſs. He courted the Flemiſh miniſters with aſſiduity. He repreſented to them the abſurdity of all the maxims hitherto adopted with reſpect to the government of America, and particularly the defects of that arrangement which Ximenes had introduced. The memory of Ferdinand was odious to the Flemings. The ſuperior virtue and abilities of Ximenes had long been the object of their envy. They fondly wiſhed to have a plauſible pretext for condemning the meaſures, both of the monarch and of the miniſter, and of reflecting ſome diſcredit on their political wiſdom. The friends of Don Diego Columbus, as well as the Spaniſh courtiers,

* Hiſt. of Charles V. vol. ii. p. 43.

who

who had been diſſatisfied with the cardinal's adminiſtration, joined Las Caſas in cenſuring the ſcheme of ſending ſuperintendants to America. This union of ſo many intereſts and paſſions was irreſiſtible; and in conſequence of it, the fathers of St. Jerome, and their aſſociate Zuazo, were recalled. Roderigo de Figueroa, a lawyer of ſome eminence, was appointed chief judge of the iſland, and received inſtructions, in compliance with the requeſt of Las Caſas, to examine once more, with the utmoſt attention the point in controverſy between him and the people of the colony, with reſpect to the treatment of the natives; and in the mean time to do every thing in his power to alleviate their ſufferings, and prevent the extinction of the race*.

Scheme of ſupplying the colonies with negroes.

THIS was all that the zeal of Las Caſas could procure, at that juncture, in favour of the Indians. The impoſſibility of carrying on any improvement in America, unleſs the Spaniſh planters could command the labour of the natives, was an inſuperable objection to his plan of treating them as free ſubjects. In order to provide ſome remedy for this, without which he found it was in vain to mention his ſcheme, Las Caſas propoſed to purchaſe a ſufficient number of negroes from the Portugueſe ſettlements on the coaſt of Africa, and to tranſport them to America, in order that they might be employed as ſlaves in working the mines and cultivating the ground. One of the firſt advantages which the Portugueſe had derived from their diſcoveries in Africa, aroſe from the trade in ſlaves. Various circumſtances concurred in reviving this odious commerce, which had been long aboliſhed in Europe, and which is no leſs repugnant to the feelings of humanity, than to the principles of religion. As early as the year one thouſand five hun-

* Herrera, dec. 2. lib. ii. c. 16, 19, 21. lib. iii. c. 7. 8.

BOOK III.

dred and three, a few negro-ſlaves had been ſent into the New World*. In the year one thouſand five hundred and eleven, Ferdinand permitted the importation of them in great numbers†. They were found to be a more robuſt and hardy race than the natives of America. They were more capable of enduring fatigue, more patient under ſervitude, and the labour of one negro was computed to be equal to that of four Indians‡. Cardinal Ximenes, however, when ſolicited to encourage this commerce, peremptorily rejected the propoſition, becauſe he perceived the iniquity of reducing one race of men to ſlavery, while he was conſulting about the means of reſtoring liberty to another‖. But Las Caſas, from the inconſiſtency natural to men who hurry with headlong impetuoſity towards a favourite point, was incapable of making this diſtinction. While he contended earneſtly for the liberty of the people born in one quarter of the globe, he laboured to enſlave the inhabitants of another region; and in the warmth of his zeal to ſave the Americans from the yoke, pronounced it to be lawful and expedient to impoſe one ſtill heavier upon the Africans. Unfortunately for the latter, Las Caſa's plan was adopted. Charles granted a patent to one of his Flemiſh favourites, containing an excluſive right of importing four thouſand negroes into America. He ſold his patent to ſome Genoeſe merchants for twenty-five thouſand ducats, and they were the firſt who brought into a regular form that commerce for ſlaves between Africa and America, which has ſince been carried on to ſuch an amazing extent §.

1517.

1518. Las Caſas propoſes ſending labourers to Hiſpaniola.

But the Genoeſe merchants, conducting their operations, at firſt, with the rapacity of monopo-

* Herrera dec. 1. lib. v. c. 12. † Ibid. lib. viii. c. 9.
‡ Ibid. lib. x. c. 5. ‖ Ibid. dec. 2. lib. ii. c. 8.
§ Ibid. lib. ii. c. 20.

liſts,

lists demanded such an high price for negroes, that the number imported into Hispaniola made no great change upon the state of the colony. Las Casas, whose zeal was no less inventive than indefatigable, had recourse to another expedient for the relief of the Indians. He observed, that most of the persons who had settled hitherto in America, were soldiers and sailors employed in the discovery or conquest of the country; the younger sons of noble families, allured by the prospect of acquiring sudden wealth; or desperate adventurers, whom their indigence or crimes forced to abandon their native land. Instead of such men, who were dissolute, rapacious, and incapable of that sober persevering industry which is requisite in forming new colonies, he proposed to supply the new settlements in Hispaniola and the other islands with a sufficient number of labourers and husbandmen, who should be allured by suitable premiums to remove thither. These, as they were accustomed to fatigue, would be able to perform the work, to which the Indians, from the feebleness of their constitution, were unequal, and might soon become useful and opulent citizens. But though Hispaniola stood much in need of a recruit of inhabitants, having been visited at this time with the small-pox, which swept off many of the natives, and though Las Casas had the countenance of the Flemish ministers, this scheme was defeated by the bishop of Burgos, who thwarted all his projects*.

BOOK III. 1517.

Las Casas now despaired of procuring any relief for the Indians in those places where the Spaniards were already settled. The evil was become so inveterate there, as not to admit of a cure. But such discoveries were daily making in the continent, as gave an high idea both of its extent and

Forms the idea of a new colony.

* Herrera, dec. 2. lib. ii. c. 21.

BOOK III. 1517.

populouſneſs. In all thoſe vaſt regions there was but one feeble colony planted; and except a ſmall ſpot on the iſthmus of Darien, the natives ſtill occupied the whole country. This opened a new and more ample field for the humanity and zeal of Las Caſas, who flattered himſelf that he might prevent a pernicious ſyſtem from being introduced there, though he had failed of ſucceſs in his attempts to overturn it, where it was already eſtabliſhed. Full of this idea, he applied for a grant of the unoccupied country, ſtretching along the ſea-coaſt from the gulf of Paria to the weſtern frontier of that province now known by the name of Santa Martha. He propoſed to ſettle there with a colony compoſed of huſbandmen, labourers and eccleſiaſtics. He engaged, in the ſpace of two years, to civilize ten thouſand of the natives, and to inſtruct them ſo thoroughly in the arts of ſocial life, that from the fruits of their induſtry, an annual revenue of fifteen thouſand ducats ſhould ariſe to the King. In ten years, he expected that his improvements would be ſo far advanced, as to yield annually ſixty thouſand ducats. He ſtipulated, that no ſailor or ſoldier ſhould ever be permitted to ſettle in this diſtrict; and that no Spaniard ſhould enter it without his permiſſion. He even projected to clothe the people whom he took along with him in ſome peculiar garment, which did not reſemble the Spaniſh dreſs, that they might appear to the natives to be a different race of men from thoſe who had brought ſo many calamities upon their country.* From this ſcheme, of which I have traced only the great lines, it is manifeſt that Las Caſas had formed ideas concerning the method of treating the Indians, ſimilar to thoſe by which the Jeſuits afterwards carried on their great operations in another part of the ſame continent. He ſuppoſed that the Euro-

* Herrera, dec. 2. lib. iv. c. 2.

peans,

peans, by availing themſelves of that aſcendant which they poſſeſſed in conſequence of their ſuperior progreſs in ſcience and improvement, might gradually form the minds of the Americans to reliſh thoſe comforts of which they were deſtitute, might train them to the arts of civil life, and render them capable of its functions. BOOK III. 1517.

Favourably received.

BUT to the biſhop of Burgos and the council of the Indies this project appeared not only chimerical, but dangerous in a high degree. They deemed the faculties of the Americans to be naturally ſo limited, and their indolence ſo exceſſive, that any attempt to inſtruct or improve them would be fruitleſs. They contended, that it would be extremely imprudent to give the command of a country extending above a thouſand miles along the coaſt, to a fanciful, preſumptuous enthuſiaſt, a ſtranger to the affairs of the world, and unacquainted with the arts of government. Las Caſas, far from being diſcouraged with a repulſe, which he had reaſon to expect, had recourſe once more to the Flemiſh favourites, who zealouſly patronized his ſcheme, merely becauſe it had been rejected by the Spaniſh miniſters. They prevailed with their maſter, who had lately been raiſed to the Imperial dignity, to refer the conſideration of this meaſure to a ſelect number of his privy-counſellors; and as Las Caſas excepted againſt the members of the council of the Indies, as partial and intereſted, all of them were excluded. The deciſion of men choſen by recommendation of the Flemings, was perfectly conformable to their ſentiments. They warmly approved of Las Caſas's plan; and gave orders for carrying it into execution, but reſtricted the territory allotted him to three hundred miles along the coaſt of Cumana, allowing him, however, to extend it as far as he pleaſed towards the interior part of the country*. 1519.

* Gomara Hiſt. Gener. c. 77. Herrera, dec. 2. lib. iv. c. 3. Oviedo, lib. xix. c. 5.

THIS

BOOK III.

1517. A ſolemn deliberation concerning the mode of treating the Indians.

THIS determination did not paſs uncenſured. Almoſt every perſon who had been in the Weſt Indies exclaimed againſt it, and ſupported their opinion ſo confidently, and with ſuch plauſible reaſons, as made it adviſeable to pauſe and review the ſubject more deliberately. Charles himſelf, though accuſtomed, at this early period of his life to adopt the ſentiments of his miniſters, with ſuch ſubmiſſion and deference as did not promiſe that deciſive vigour of mind which diſtinguiſhed his riper years, began to ſuſpect that the eagerneſs with which the Flemings took part in every affair relating to America, flowed from ſome improper motive, and diſcovered an inclination to examine in perſon into the ſtate of the queſtion concerning the character of the Americans, and the proper manner of treating them. An opportunity of making this inquiry, with great advantage, ſoon occurred. Quevedo, the biſhop of Darien, who had accompanied Pedrarias to the continent in the year one thouſand five hundred and thirteen happened to land at Barcelona, where the court then reſided. It was ſoon known, that his ſentiments concerning the talents and diſpoſitions of the Indians differed from thoſe of Las Caſas; and Charles naturally concluded, that by confronting two reſpectable perſons, who, during their long reſidence in America, had full leiſure to obſerve the manners of the people whom they pretended to deſcribe, he might be able to diſcover which of them had formed his opinion with the greateſt diſcernment and accuracy.

June 20.

A DAY for this ſolemn audience was appointed. The emperor appeared with extraordinary pomp, and took his ſeat on a throne in the great hall of the palace. His principal courtiers attended. Don Diego Columbus, admiral of the Indies, was ſummoned to be preſent. The biſhop of Darien was called upon firſt

to

to deliver his opinion. He, in a ſhort diſcourſe, lamented the fatal deſolation of America, by the extinction of ſo many of its inhabitants; he acknowledged that this muſt be imputed, in ſome degree, to the exceſſive rigour and inconſiderate proceedings of the Spaniards; but declared, that all the people of the New World, whom he had ſeen either in the continent or in the iſlands, appeared to him to be a race of men marked out, by the inferiority of their talents, for ſervitude, and whom it would be impoſſible to inſtruct or improve, unleſs they were kept under the continual inſpection of a maſter. Las Caſas, at greater length, and with more fervour, defended his own ſyſtem. He rejected with indignation the idea that any race of men was born to ſervitude, as irreligious and inhumane. He aſſerted, that the faculties of the Americans were not naturally deſpicable, but unimproved; that they were capable of receiving inſtruction in the principles of religion, as well as of acquiring the induſtry and arts which would qualify them for the various offices of ſocial life; that the mildneſs and timidity of their nature rendered them ſo ſubmiſſive and docile, that they might be led and formed with a gentle hand. He profeſſed, that his intentions in propoſing the ſcheme now under conſideration were pure and diſintereſted; and though, from the accompliſhment of his deſigns, ineſtimable benefits would reſult to the crown of Caſtile, he never had claimed, nor ever would receive any recompence upon that account.

1517.

The ſcheme of Las Caſas approved of.

Charles, after hearing both, and conſulting with his miniſters, did not think himſelf ſufficiently informed to eſtabliſh any general arrangement with reſpect to the ſtate of the Indians; but as he had perfect confidence in the integrity of Las Caſas, and as even the biſhop of Darien admitted

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admitted his ſcheme to be of ſuch importance, that a trial ſhould be made of its effects, he iſſued a patent, granting him the diſtrict in Cumana formerly mentioned, with full power to eſtabliſh a colony there according to his own plan *.

His preparations for executing it.

Las Casas puſhed on the preparations for his voyage with his uſual ardour. But, either from his own inexperience in the conduct of affairs, or from the ſecret oppoſition of the Spaniſh nobility, who univerſally dreaded the ſucceſs of an inſtitution that might rob them of the induſtrious and uſeful hands which cultivated their eſtates, his progreſs in engaging huſbandmen and labourers was extremely ſlow, and he could prevail on no more than two hundred to accompany him to Cumana.

Departs for America, and meets with formidable obſtacles.

Nothing, however, could damp his zeal. With this ſlender train, hardly ſufficient to take poſſeſſion of ſuch a vaſt territory, and altogether unequal to any attempt towards civilizing its inhabitants, he ſet ſail. The firſt place at which he touched was the iſland of Porto-Rico. There he received an account of a new obſtacle to the execution of his ſcheme, more inſuperable than any he had hitherto encountered. When he left America in the year one thouſand five hundred and ſeventeen, the Spaniards had little intercourſe with any part of the continent, except the countries adjacent to the gulph of Darien. But as every ſpecies of internal induſtry began to ſtagnate in Hiſpaniola, when, by the rapid decreaſe of the natives, the Spaniards were deprived of thoſe hands with which they had hitherto carried on their operations, this prompted them to try

* Herrera, dec. 2. lib. iv. c. 3, 4, 5. Argenſola Annales de Aragon, 74, 97. Remiſal Hiſt. Gener. lib. ii. c. 19, 20.

various

various expedients for ſupplying that loſs. Conſiderable numbers of negroes were imported; but, on account of their exorbitant price, many of the planters could not afford to purchaſe them. In order to procure ſlaves at an eaſier rate, ſome of theſe fitted out veſſels to cruiſe along the coaſt of the continent. In places where they found themſelves inferior in ſtrength, they traded with the natives, and gave European toys in exchange for the plates of gold which they wore as ornaments; but, wherever they could ſurpriſe or overpower the Indians, they carried them off by force, and ſold them as ſlaves in Hiſpaniola *. In thoſe predatory excurſions the moſt atrocious acts of violence and cruelty were committed. The Spaniſh name was held in deteſtation all over the continent. Whenever any ſhips appeared, the inhabitants either fled to the woods, or ruſhed down to the ſhore in arms, to repel thoſe hated diſturbers of their tranquillity. They forced ſome parties of the Spaniards to retreat with precipitation; they cut off others; and in the violence of their reſentment againſt the whole nation, they murdered two Dominican miſſionaries, whoſe zeal had prompted them to ſettle in the province of Cumana †. This outrage againſt perſons revered for their ſanctity, excited ſuch indignation among the people of Hiſpaniola, who, notwithſtanding all their licentious and cruel proceedings, were poſſeſſed with a wonderful zeal for religion, and a ſuperſtitious reſpect for its miniſters, that they determined to inflict exemplary puniſhment, not only upon the perpetrators of that crime, but upon the whole nation. With this view, they gave the command of five ſhips and three hundred men to Diego Ocampo, with orders to lay waſte the country of Cumana with fire and ſword, and to tranſ-

* Herrera, dec. 3. lib. ii. c. 3. † Oviedo Hiſt. lib. 19. c. 3.

port

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port all the inhabitants as ſlaves to Hiſpaniola. This armament Las Caſas found at Porto Rico, in its way to the continent; and as Ocampo refuſed to defer his voyage, he immediately perceived that it would be impoſſible to attempt the execution of his pacific plan in a country which was the ſeat of war and deſolation *.

30th April. Labours to ſurmount them.

In order to provide againſt the effects of this unfortunate incident, he ſ[illegible] ſail immediately for St. Domingo, leaving his followers cantoned out among the planters in Porto Rico. From many concurring cauſes, the reception which Las Caſas met with in Hiſpaniola was very unfavourable. In his negotiations for the relief of the Indians, he had cenſured the conduct of his countrymen ſettled there with ſuch honeſt ſeverity, as rendered him univerſally odious to them. They conſidered their own ruin as the inevitable conſequence of his ſucceſs. They were now elated with hope of receiving a large recruit of ſlaves from Cumana, which muſt be relinquiſhed if Las Caſas was aſſiſted in ſettling his projected colony there. Figueroa, in conſequence of the inſtructions he had received in Spain, had made an experiment concerning the capacity of the Indians, which was repreſented as deciſive againſt the ſyſtem of Las Caſas. He collected in Hiſpaniola a good number of the natives, and ſettled them in two villages, leaving them at perfect liberty, and with the uncontrouled direction of their own actions. But that people, accuſtomed to a mode of life extremely different, incapable of aſſuming new habits at once, and dejected too with their own misfortunes, as well as thoſe of their country, exerted ſo little induſtry in cultivating the ground, appeared ſo devoid of ſolicitude or foreſight in providing for their own wants, and were ſuch ſtrangers to arrangement in con-

* Herrera, dec. 2. lib. ix. c. 8. 9.

ducting

ducting their affairs, that the Spaniards pronounced them incapable of being formed to live like men in ſocial life, and conſidered them as children, who ſhould be kept under the perpetual tutelage of perſons ſuperior to themſelves in wiſdom and ſagacity *.

Final miſcarriage of his ſcheme.

NOTWITHSTANDING all thoſe circumſtances, which alienated the people to whom he applied from himſelf and from his meaſures, Las Caſas, by his activity and perſeverance, by ſome conceſſions, and many threats, obtained at length a ſmall body of troops to protect him and his colony at their firſt landing. But upon his return to Porto-Rico, he found that the diſeaſes of the climate had been fatal to ſeveral of his people; and that others having got employment in that iſland, refuſed to follow him. With the handful that remained, he ſet ſail and landed in Cumana. Ocampo had executed his commiſſion in that province with ſuch barbarous rage, having maſſacred many of the inhabitants, ſent others in chains to Hiſpaniola, and forced the reſt to fly for ſhelter to the woods, that the people of a ſmall colony, which he had planted at a place which he named *Toledo*, were ready to periſh for want in a deſolated country. There, however, Las Caſas, was obliged to fix his reſidence, though deſerted both by the troops appointed to protect him, and by thoſe under the command of Ocampo, who foreſaw and dreaded the calamities to which he muſt be expoſed in that wretched ſtation. He made the firſt proviſion in his power for the ſafety and ſubſiſtence of his followers; but as his utmoſt efforts availed little towards ſecuring either the one or the other, he returned to Hiſpaniola, in order to ſolicit more effectual aid for the preſervation of men, who from confidence in him had ventured

* Herrera, dec. 2. lib. x. c. 5.

into

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1517. into a poſt of ſo much danger. Soon after his departure, the natives, having diſcovered the feeble and defenceleſs ſtate of the Spaniards, aſſembled ſecretly, attacked them with the fury natural to men exaſperated by many injuries, cut off a good number, and compelled the reſt to fly in the utmoſt conſternation to the iſland of Cubagua. The ſmall colony ſettled there, on account of the pearl fiſhery, catching the panic with which they had been ſeized, abandoned the iſland, and not a Spaniard remained in any part of the continent, or adjacent iſlands, from the gulph of Paria, to the borders of Darien. Aſtoniſhed at ſuch a ſucceſſion of diſaſters, Las Caſas was aſhamed to ſhew his face after this fatal termination of all his ſplendid ſchemes. He ſhut himſelf up in the convent of the Dominicans at St. Domingo, and ſoon after aſſumed the habit of that order *.

THOUGH the expulſion of the colony from Cumana happened in the year one thouſand five hundred and twenty-one, I have choſen to trace the progreſs of Las Caſas's negociations from their firſt riſe to their final iſſue without interruption. His ſyſtem was the object of long and attentive diſcuſſion; and though his efforts in behalf of the oppreſſed Americans, partly from his own raſhneſs and imprudence, and partly from the malevolent oppoſition of his adverſaries, were not attended with that ſucceſs which he promiſed with too ſanguine confidence, they gave riſe to various regulations which were of ſome benefit to that unhappy people. I return now to the hiſtory of the Spaniſh diſcoveries, as they occur in the order of time †.

* Herrera, dec. 2. lib. x. c. 5. dec. 3. lib. ii. c. 3, 4, 5. Oviedo Hiſt. lib. xix. c. 5. Gomara, c. 77. Davilla Padilla, lib. i. c. 97. Remeſal Hiſt. Gen. lib. 11. c. 22, 23.

† Herrera, dec. 2. lib. x. c. 5. p. 329.

DIEGO

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DIEGO VELASQUEZ, who conquered Cuba in the year one thouſand five hundred and eleven, ſtill retained the government of that iſland, as the deputy of Don Diego Columbus, though he ſeldom acknowledged his ſuperior, and aimed at rendering his own authority altogether independent *. Under his prudent adminiſtration Cuba became one of the moſt flouriſhing of the Spaniſh ſettlements. The fame of this allured many perſons from the other colonies, in hopes of finding there either ſome permanent eſtabliſhment, or ſome employment for their activity. As Cuba lay to the weſt of all the iſlands occupied by the Spaniards, and as the ocean, which ſtretches beyond it towards that quarter, had not hitherto been explored, theſe circumſtances naturally invited the inhabitants to attempt new diſcoveries. An expedition for this purpoſe, in which activity and reſolution might conduct to ſudden wealth, was more ſuited to the genius of the age, than the patient induſtry requiſite in clearing ground, and manufacturing ſugar. Inſtigated by this ſpirit, ſeveral officers, who had ſerved under Pedrarias in Darien, entered into an aſſociation to undertake a voyage of diſcovery. They perſuaded Franciſco Hernandez Cordova, an opulent planter in Cuba, and a man of diſtinguiſhed courage, to join with them in the adventure, and choſe him to be their commander. Velaſquez not only approved of the deſign, but aſſiſted in carrying it on. As the veterans from Darien were extremely indigent, he and Cordova advanced money for purchaſing three ſmall veſſels, and furniſhing them with every thing requiſite either for traffic or for war, a hundred and ten men embarked on board of them, and ſailed from St. Jago de Cuba, on the eighth

1517. New diſcoveries towards the weſt.

* Herrera, dec. 2. lib. ii. c. 19.

of

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of February one thouſand five hundred and ſeventeen. By the advice of their chief pilot, Antonio Alaminos, who had ſerved under the firſt admiral Columbus, they ſtood directly weſt, relying on the opinion of that great navigator, who uniformly maintained that a weſterly courſe would lead to the moſt important diſcoveries.

On the twenty-firſt day after their departure from St. Jago, they ſaw land, which proved to be *Cape Cotoche*, the eaſtern point of that large peninſula projecting from the continent of America, which ſtill retains its original name of *Yucatan*. As they approached the ſhore, five canoes came off full of people decently clad in cotton garments; an aſtoniſhing ſpectacle to the Spaniards, who had found every other part of America poſſeſſed by naked ſavages. Cordova endeavoured by ſmall preſents to gain the good will of theſe people. They, though amazed at the ſtrange objects now preſented for the firſt time to their view, invited the Spaniards to viſit their habitations, with an appearance of cordiality. They landed accordingly, and as they advanced into the country, they obſerved with new wonder ſome large houſes built with ſtone. But they ſoon found that, if the people of Yucatan had made progreſs in improvement beyond their countrymen, they were likewiſe more artful and warlike. For though the Cazique received Cordova with many tokens of friendſhip, he had poſted a conſiderable body of his ſubjects in ambuſh behind a thicket, who upon a ſignal given by him, ruſhed out and attacked the Spaniards with great boldneſs, and ſome degree of martial order. At the firſt flight of their arrows, fifteen of the Spaniards were wounded; but the Indians were ſtruck with ſuch terror by the ſudden exploſion of the fire-arms, and ſo ſurpriſed at the execution done

Yucatan.

by

by them, by the croſs-bows, and by the other weapons of their new enemies, that they fled precipitately, and Cordova quitted a country where he had met with ſuch a fierce reception, carrying off two priſoners, together with the ornaments of a ſmall temple, which he plundered in his retreat. BOOK III. 1517.

He continued his courſe towards the weſt without loſing ſight of the coaſt, and on the ſixteenth day arrived at Campeachy. There the natives received them more hoſpitably; but the Spaniards were much ſurpriſed that on all the extenſive coaſt along which they had ſailed, and which they imagined to be a large iſland, they had not obſerved any river *. As their water began to fail, they advanced, in hopes of finding a ſupply; and at length they diſcovered the mouth of a river at Potonchan, ſome leagues beyond Campeachy. Campeachy.

Cordova landed all his troops in order to protect the ſailors while employed in filling the caſks; but notwithſtanding this precaution, the natives ruſhed down upon them with ſuch fury, and in ſuch numbers, that forty-ſeven of the Spaniards were killed upon the ſpot, and one man only of the whole body eſcaped unhurt. Their commander, though wounded in twelve different places, directed the retreat with preſence of mind equal to the courage with which he had led them on in the engagement, and with much difficulty they regained their ſhips. After this fatal repulſe, nothing remained but to haſten back to Cuba with their ſhattered forces. In their paſſage thither they ſuffered the moſt exquiſite diſtreſs for want of water, that men wounded and ſickly, ſhut up in ſmall veſſels, and expoſed to the heat of the torrid zone, can be ſuppoſed to endure.

* See NOTE XXVI.

Some

BOOK III.

Some of them, ſinking under theſe calamities, died by the way; Cordova, their commander, expired ſoon after they landed in Cuba *.

1517. Voyage of Grijalva.

NOTWITHSTANDING the diſaſtrous concluſion of this expedition, it contributed rather to animate than to damp a ſpirit of enterprize among the Spaniards. They had diſcovered an extenſive country, ſituated at no great diſtance from Cuba, fertile in appearance, and poſſeſſed by a people far ſuperior in improvement to any hitherto known in America. Though they had carried on little commercial intercourſe with the natives, they had brought off ſome ornaments of gold, not conſiderable in value, but of ſingular fabric. Theſe circumſtances, related with the exaggeration natural to men deſirous of heightening the merit of their own exploits, were more than ſufficient to excite romantic hopes and expectations. Great numbers offered to engage in a new expedition. Velaſquez, ſolicitous to diſtinguiſh himſelf by ſome ſervice ſo meritorious, as might entitle him to claim the government of Cuba independent of the admiral, not only encouraged their ardour, but at his own expence fitted out four ſhips for the voyage. Two hundred and forty volunteers, among whom were ſeveral perſons of rank and fortune, embarked in this enterpriſe. The command of it was given to Juan de Grijalva, a young man of known merit and courage; with inſtructions to obſerve with attention the nature of the countries which he ſhould diſcover, to barter for gold, and if circumſtances were

* Herrera, dec. 2. lib. ii. c. 17, 18. Hiſtor. Verdadera de la Conquiſta de la Neuva Eſpana por Bernal Diaz. del Caſtillo, cap. 1. 7. Oviedo. lib. xvii. c. 3. Gomara, c. 52. P. Martyr de inſulis nuper inventis, p. 329.

inviting,

inviting, to ſettle a colony in ſome proper ſtation. He ſailed from St. Jago de Cuba on the eighth of April one thouſand five hundred and eighteen. The pilot Alaminos held the ſame courſe as in the former voyage, but the violence of the currents carrying the ſhips to the ſouth, the firſt land which they made was the iſland of *Cozumel*, to the eaſt of Yucatan. As all the inhabitants fled to the woods and mountains at their approach, they made no long ſtay there, and without any remarkable occurrence they reached Potonchan on the oppoſite ſide of the peninſula. The deſire of avenging their countrymen who had been ſlain there, concurred with their ideas of good policy, in prompting them to land, that they might chaſtiſe the Indians of that diſtrict with ſuch exemplary rigour, as might ſtrike terror into all the people around them. But though they diſembarked all their troops, and carried a-ſhore ſome field-pieces, the Indians fought with ſuch courage, that the Spaniards gained the victory with difficulty, and were confirmed in their opinion that the inhabitants of this country would prove more formidable enemies than any they had met with in other parts of America. From Potonchan, they continued their voyage towards the weſt, keeping as near as poſſible to the ſhore, and caſting anchor every evening, from dread of the dangerous accidents to which they might be expoſed in an unknown ſea. During the day, their eyes were turned continually towards land, with a mixture of ſurpriſe and wonder at the beauty of the country, and the novelty of the objects which they beheld. Many villages were ſcattered along the coaſt, in which they could diſtinguiſh houſes of ſtone that appeared white and lofty at a diſtance. In the warmth of their admiration, they fancied theſe to be cities adorned with towers and pinacles; and one of the ſoldiers happening to remark that this country re-

1518.

Diſcovers New Spain.

May 3.

BOOK III. 1518.

ſembled Spain in its oppearance, Grijalva, with univerſal applauſe called it *New Spain*, the name which ſtill diſtinguiſhes this extenſive and opulent province of the Spaniſh empire in America. They landed in a river which the natives called *Tabaſco*, and the fame of their victory at Potonchan having reached this place, the Cazique not only received them amicably, but beſtowed preſents upon them of ſuch value, as confirmed the high ideas which the Spaniards had formed with reſpect to the wealth and fertility of the country. Theſe ideas were raiſed ſtill higher by what occurred at the place where they next touched. This was conſiderably to the weſt of Tabaſco, in the province ſince known by the name of Guaxaca. There they were received with the reſpect paid to ſuperior beings. The people perfumed them as they landed with incenſe of gum copal, and preſented to them as offerings the moſt choice delicacies of their country. They were extremely fond of trading with them, and in ſix days the Spaniards obtained ornaments of gold, of curious workmanſhip, to the value of fifteen thouſand peſos, in exchange for European toys of ſmall price. The two priſoners whom Cordova had brought from Yucatan, had hitherto ſerved as interpreters; but as they did not underſtand the language of this country, the Spaniards learned from the natives by ſigns, that they were ſubjects of a great monarch called Montezuma, whoſe dominion extended over that and many other provinces. Leaving this place, with which he had ſo much reaſon to be pleaſed, Grijalva continued his courſe towards the weſt. He landed on a ſmall iſland, which he named the iſland of ſacrifices, becauſe there the Spaniards, beheld for the firſt time, the horrid ſpectacle of human victims, which the barbarous ſuperſtition of the natives offered to their gods. He touched at another ſmall iſland, which

June 9. Tabaſco.

Guaxaca.

June 19.

St. John de Ulua.

he

he called St. John de Ulua. From this place he diſpatched Pedro de Alvarado, one of his officers, to Velaſquez, with a full account of the important diſcoveries which he had made, and with all the treaſure that he had acquired by trafficking with the natives. After the departure of Alvarado, he himſelf, with the remaining veſſels, proceeded along the coaſt as far as the river Panuco, the country ſtill appearing to be well peopled, fertile, and opulent.

Reaſons for not leaving a colony there.

SEVERAL of Grijalva's officers contended, that it was not enough to have diſcovered thoſe delightful regions, or to have performed, at their different landing-places, the empty ceremony of taking poſſeſſion of them for the crown of Caſtile, and that their glory was incomplete, unleſs they planted a colony in ſome proper ſtation, which might not only ſecure the Spaniſh nation a footing in the country, but, with the reinforcements which they were certain of receiving, might gradually ſubject the whole to the dominion of their ſovereign. But the ſquadron had now been above five months at ſea; the greateſt part of their proviſions was exhauſted, and what remained of their ſtores ſo much corrupted by the heat of the climate, as to be almoſt unfit for uſe; they had loſt ſome men by death; others were ſickly; the country was crowded with people who ſeemed to be intelligent as well as brave; and they were under the government of one powerful monarch, who could bring them to act againſt their invaders with united force. To plant a colony under ſo many circumſtances of diſadvantage, was to expoſe it to inevitable deſtruction. Grijalva, though poſſeſſed both of ambition and courage, was deſtitute of the ſuperior talents capable of forming or executing ſuch a great plan. He judged it more prudent to return to Cuba, having

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ing fulfilled the purpoſe of his voyage, and accompliſhed all that the armament which he commanded enabled him to perform. He returned to St. Jago de Cuba, on the twenty-ſixth of October, from which he had taken his departure about ſix months before*.

Preparations for another expedition.

THIS was the longeſt as well as the moſt ſucceſsful voyage which the Spaniards had hitherto made in the New World. They had diſcovered that Yucatan was not an iſland as they had ſuppoſed, but part of the great continent of America. From Potonchan they had purſued their courſe for many hundred miles along a coaſt formerly unexplored, ſtretching at firſt towards the weſt, and then turning to the north; all the country which they had diſcovered appeared to be no leſs valuable than extenſive. As ſoon as Alvarado reached Cuba, Velaſquez, tranſported with ſucceſs ſo far beyond his moſt ſanguine expectations, immediately diſpatched a perſon of confidence to carry this important intelligence to Spain, to exhibit the rich productions of the countries which had been diſcovered by his means, and to ſolicit ſuch an increaſe of authority as might enable and encourage him to attempt the conqueſt of them. Without waiting the return of his meſſenger, or for the arrival of Grijalva, of whom he was become ſo jealous or diſtruſtful, that he reſolved no longer to employ him, he began to prepare ſuch a powerful armament, as might prove equal to an enterpriſe of ſo much danger and importance.

BUT as the expedition upon which Velaſquez was now intent, terminated in conqueſts of greater

* Herrera, dec. 11. lib. iii. c. 1, 2, 9, 10. Bernal Diaz, c. 8---17. Oviedo Hiſt. lib. xvii. c. 9. 20. Gomara, c. 49.

moment

moment than what the Spaniards had hitherto atchieved, and led them to the knowledge of a people, who, if compared with ſuch of the Americans as were then known, may be conſidered as highly civiliſed; it is proper to pauſe before we proceed to the hiſtory of events extremely different from thoſe which we have already related, in order to take a view of the ſtate of the New World when firſt diſcovered, and to contemplate the policy and manners of the rude uncultivated tribes that occupied all the parts of it, with which the Spaniards were at this time acquainted.

THE

HISTORY

OF

AMERICA.

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TWENTY-SIX years had now elapſed ſince Columbus conducted the people of Europe to the New World. During that period the Spaniards had made great progreſs in exploring its various regions. They had viſited all the iſlands ſcattered in different cluſters through that part of the ocean which flows in between North and South America. They had ſailed along the eaſtern coaſt of the continent from the river De la Plata to the bottom of the Mexican gulf, and had found that it ſtretched without interruption through this vaſt portion of the globe. They had diſcovered the great Southern Ocean, which opened new proſpects in that quarter. They had acquired ſome knowledge of the coaſt of Florida, which led them to obſerve the continent as it extended in an oppoſite direction; and though they puſhed their diſcoveries no farther towards the north, other nations

What parts of America were then known.

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tions had viſited thoſe parts which they neglected. The Engliſh, in a voyage, the motives and ſucceſs of which ſhall be related in another part of this Hiſtory, had ſailed along the coaſt of America from Labrador to the confines of Florida; and the Portugueſe, in queſt of a ſhorter paſſage to the Eaſt Indies, had ventured into the northern ſeas, and viewed the ſame regions *. Thus at the period where I have choſen to take a view of the ſtate of the New World, its extent was known almoſt from its northern extremity to thirty-five degrees ſouth of the equator. The countries which ſtretch from thence to the ſouthern boundary of America, the great empire of Peru, and the extenſive dominions ſubject to the ſovereigns of Mexico, were ſtill undiſcovered.

The vaſt extent of the New World.

When we contemplate the New World, the firſt circumſtance that ſtrikes us is its immenſe extent. It was not a ſmall portion of the earth, ſo inconſiderable that it might have eſcaped the obſervation or reſearch of former ages, which Columbus diſcovered. He made known a new hemiſphere, of greater extent than either Europe, or Aſia, or Africa, the three noted diviſions of the ancient continent, and not much inferior in dimenſions to a third part of the habitable globe.

America is remarkable not only for its magnitude, but for its poſition. It ſtretches from the northern polar circle to a high ſouthern latitude, above fifteen hundred miles beyond the fartheſt extremity of the old continent on that ſide of the line. A country of ſuch extent paſſes through all the climates capable of becoming the habitation of man, and fit for yielding the various productions

* Herrera, dec. 1. lib. vi. c. 16.

peculiar

peculiar either to the temperate or to the torrid regions of the earth. BOOK IV.

NEXT to the extent of the New World, the grandeur of the objects which it preſents to view is moſt apt to ſtrike the eye of an obſerver. Nature ſeems here to have carried on her operations with a bolder hand, and to have diſtinguiſhed the features of this country by a peculiar magnificence. The mountains of America are much ſuperior in height to thoſe in the other diviſions of the globe. Even the plain of Quito, which may be conſidered as the baſe of the Andes, is elevated farther above the ſea than the top of the Pyrenees. This ſtupendous ridge of the Andes, no leſs remarkable for extent than elevation, riſes in different places more than one third above the Pike of Teneriffe, the higheſt land in the ancient hemiſphere. The Andes may literally be ſaid to hide their heads in the clouds; the ſtorms often roll, and the thunder burſts below their ſummits, which, though expoſed to the rays of the ſun in the centre of the torrid zone, are covered with everlaſting ſnows *.

Grand objects it preſents to view.

Its mountains,

FROM thoſe lofty mountains deſcend rivers proportionally large, with which the ſtreams in the ancient continent are not to be compared, either for length of courſe, or the vaſt body of water which they roll towards the ocean. The Maragnon, the Orinoco, the Plata, in South America, the Miſſiſippi and St. Laurence in North America, flow in ſuch ſpacious channels, that, long before they feel the influence of the tide, they reſemble arms of the ſea rather than rivers of freſh water †.

rivers,

* See NOTE XXVII.

† See NOTE XXVIII.

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lakes.

THE lakes of the New World are no leſs conſpicuous for grandeur than its mountains and rivers. There is nothing in other parts of the globe which reſembles the prodigious chain of lakes in North America. They may properly be termed inland ſeas of freſh water; and even thoſe of the ſecond or third claſs in magnitude, are of larger circuit than the greateſt lake of the antient continent.

Its form favourable to commerce.

THE New World is of a form extremely favourable to commercial intercourſe. When a continent, like Africa, is compoſed of one vaſt ſolid maſs, unbroken by arms of the ſea penetrating into its interior parts, with few large rivers, and thoſe at a conſiderable diſtance from each other, the greater part of it ſeems deſtined to remain for ever uncivilized, and to be debarred from any active or enlarged communication with the reſt of mankind. When, like Europe, a continent is opened by inlets of the ocean of vaſt extent, ſuch as the Mediterranean and Baltic; or when, like Aſia, its coaſt is broken by deep bays advancing far into the country, ſuch as the Black Sea, the gulfs of Arabia, of Perſia, of Bengal, of Siam, and of Leotang; when the ſurrounding ſeas are filled with large and fertile iſlands, and the continent itſelf watered with a variety of navigable rivers, thoſe regions may be ſaid to poſſeſs whatever can facilitate the progreſs of their inhabitants in commerce and improvement. In all theſe reſpects America may bear a compariſon with the other quarters of the globe. The gulf of Mexico, which flows in between North and South America, may be conſidered as a Mediterranean ſea, which opens a maritime commerce with all the fertile countries by which it is incircled. The iſlands ſcattered in it are inferior only to thoſe

in

in the Indian Archipelago, in number, in magnitude, and in value. As we ſtretch along the northern diviſion of the American hemiſphere, the Bay of Cheſapeak preſents a ſpacious inlet, which conducts the navigator far into the interior parts of provinces no leſs fertile than extenſive; and if ever the progreſs of culture and population ſhall mitigate the extreme rigour of the climate in the more northern diſtricts of America, Hudſon's Bay may become as ſubſervient to the commercial intercourſe in that quarter of the globe, as the Baltic is in Europe. The other great portion of the New World is encompaſſed on every ſide by the ſea, except one narrow neck, which ſeparates the Atlantic from the Pacific Ocean; and though it be not opened by ſpacious bays or arms of the ſea, its interior parts are rendered acceſſible by a number of large rivers, fed by ſo many auxiliary ſtreams, flowing in ſuch various directions, that, without any aid from the hand of induſtry and art, an inland navigation may be carried on through all the provinces from the river De la Plata to the gulf of Paria. Nor is this bounty of nature confined to the ſouthern diviſion of America; its northern continent abounds no leſs in rivers which are navigable almoſt to their ſources, and by its immenſe chain of lakes proviſion is made for an inland communication, more extenſive and commodious than in any quarter of the globe. The countries ſtretching from the gulf of Darien on one ſide, to that of California on the other, which form the chain that binds the two parts of the American continent together, are not deſtitute of peculiar advantages. Their coaſt on one ſide is waſhed by the Atlantic Ocean, on the other by the Pacific. Some of their rivers flow into the former, ſome into the latter, and ſecure to them all the commercial benefits that may reſult from a communication with both.

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Temperature of its climate.

But what moſt diſtinguiſhes America from other parts of the earth, is the peculiar temperature of its climate, and the different laws to which it is ſubject with reſpect to the diſtribution of heat and cold. We cannot determine preciſely the portion of heat felt in any part of the globe, merely by meaſuring its diſtance from the equator. The climate of a country is affected, in ſome degree, by its elevation above the ſea, by the extent of continent, by the nature of the ſoil, the height of adjacent mountains, and many other circumſtances. The influence of theſe, however, is, from various cauſes, leſs conſiderable in the greater part of the ancient continent; and from knowing the poſition of any country there, we can pronounce with more certainty what will be the warmth of its climate, and the nature of its productions.

Predominance of cold.

The maxims which are founded upon obſervation of our hemiſphere will not apply to the other. There, cold predominates. The rigour of the frigid zone extends over half of that which ſhould be temperate by its poſition. Countries where the grape and the fig ſhould ripen, are buried under ſnow one half of the year; and the lands ſituated in the ſame parallel with the moſt fertile and beſt cultivated provinces in Europe, are chilled with perpetual froſts, which almoſt deſtroy the power of vegetation *. As we advanced to thoſe parts of America which lie in the ſame parallel with provinces of Aſia and Africa, bleſſed with an uniform enjoyment of ſuch genial warmth as is moſt friendly to life and vegetation, the dominion of cold continues to be felt, and winter, though during a ſhort period, often reigns with extreme ſeverity. If we proceed along the American continent into the torrid zone, we ſhall find the cold

* See NOTE XXIX.

prevalent

prevalent in the New World extending itſelf alſo to this region of the globe, and mitigating the exceſs of its fervour. While the negro on the coaſt of Africa is ſcorched with unremitting heat, the inhabitant of Peru breathes an air equally mild and temperate, and is perpetually ſhaded under a canopy of grey clouds, which intercept the fierce beams of the ſun, without obſtructing his friendly influence *. Along the eaſtern coaſt of America, the climate, though more ſimilar to that of the torrid zone in other parts of the earth, is nevertheleſs conſiderably milder than thoſe countries of Aſia and Africa which lie in the ſame latitude. If from the ſouthern tropic we continue our progreſs to the extremity of the American continent, we meet with frozen ſeas, and countries horrid, barren, and ſcarcely habitable for cold, ſooner than in the north *.

Various cauſes combine in rendering the climate of America ſo extremely different from that of the ancient continent. Though the utmoſt extent of America towards the north be not yet diſcovered, we know that it advances nearer to the pole than either Europe or Aſia. The latter have large ſeas to the north, which are open during part of the year; and even when covered with ice, the wind that blows over them is leſs intenſely cold than that which blows over land in the ſame high latitudes. But in America the land ſtretches from the river St. Laurence towards the pole, and ſpreads out immenſely to the weſt. A chain of enormous mountains, covered with ſnow and ice, Cauſes of this.

* Voyage de Ulloa, tom. i. p. 453. Anſon's Voyage, p. 184.

† Anſon's Voyage, p. 74; and Voyage de Quiros, chez Hiſt. Gen. des Voyages, tom. xiv. p. 83. Richard Hiſt. Natur. de l'Air. ii. 305, &c.

runs

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runs through all this dreary region. The wind, in paſſing over ſuch an extent of high and frozen land, becomes ſo impregnated with cold, that it acquires a piercing keenneſs, which it retains in its progreſs through warmer climates, and is not entirely mitigated until it reach the Gulph of Mexico. Over all the continent of North America, a north-weſterly wind and exceſſive cold are ſynonymous terms. Even in the moſt ſultry weather, the moment that the wind veers to that quarter, its penetrating influence is felt in a tranſition from heat to cold, no leſs violent than ſudden. To this powerful cauſe we may aſcribe the extraordinary dominion of cold, and its violent inroads into the ſouthern provinces in that part of the globe *.

Other cauſes no leſs remarkable, diminiſh the active power of heat in thoſe parts of the American continent which lie between the tropics. In all that portion of the globe, the wind blows in an invariable direction from eaſt to weſt. As this wind blows its courſe acroſs the ancient continent, it arrives at the countries which ſtretch along the weſtern ſhore of Africa, inflamed with all the fiery particles which it hath collected from the ſultry plains of Aſia, and the burning ſands in the African deſarts. The coaſt of Africa is, accordingly, the region of the earth which feels the moſt fervent heat, and is expoſed to the unmitigated ardour of the torrid zone. But this ſame wind which brings ſuch an acceſſion of warmth to the countries lying between the river of Senegal and Cafraria, traverſes the Atlantic Ocean before it reaches the American ſhore. It is cooled in its paſſage over this vaſt body of water, and is felt as a refreſhing gale along the coaſts of Braſil †, and Guiana, rendering

* Charlevoix Hiſt. de Nov. Fr. iii. 165. Hiſt. generale Voyages, tom. xv. 215, &c.

† See NOTE XXX.

theſe

theſe countries, though among the warmeſt in America, temperate, when compared with thoſe which lie oppoſite to them in Africa *. As this wind advances in its courſe acroſs America, it meets with immenſe plains, covered with impenetrable foreſts, or occupied by large rivers, marſhes, and ſtagnating waters, where it can recover no conſiderable degree of heat. At length it arrives at the Andes, which run from north to ſouth through the whole continent. In paſſing over their elevated and frozen ſummits, it is ſo thoroughly cooled, that the greater part of the countries beyond them hardly feel the ardour to which they ſeem expoſed by their ſituation †. In the other provinces of America, from Tierra Firmè weſtward to the Mexican Empire, the heat of the climate is tempered, in ſome places, by the elevation of the land above the ſea, in others, by their extraordinary humidity, and in all, by the enormous mountains ſcattered over this tract. The iſlands of America in the Torrid Zone are either ſmall or mountainous, and are fanned alternately by refreſhing ſea and land-breezes.

THE cauſes of the extraordinary cold towards the ſouthern limits of America, and in the ſeas beyond it, cannot be aſcertained in a manner equally ſatisfying. It was long ſuppoſed that a vaſt continent, diſtinguiſhed by the name of *Terra Auſtralis Incognita*, lay between the ſouthern extremity of America and the Antarctic pole. The ſame principles which account for the extraordinary degree of cold in the northern regions of America, were employed in order to explain that which is felt at Cape Horn and the adjacent countries. The immenſe extent of the ſouthern continent, and the

* See NOTE XXXI.

† Acoſta Hiſt. Novi Orbis, lib. ii. c. 11. Buffon Hiſt. Naturelle, &c. tom. ii. 512, &c. ix. 107, &c. Oſborn's Collect. of Voages, ii. p. 868.

large

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large rivers which it poured into the ocean, were mentioned and admitted by philoſophers, as cauſes ſufficient to occaſion the unuſual ſenſation of cold, and the ſtill more uncommon appearances of frozen ſeas in that region of the globe. But the imaginary continent to which ſuch influence was aſcribed, having been ſearched for in vain, and the ſpace which it was ſuppoſed to occupy, having been found to be an open ſea, new conjectures muſt be formed with reſpect to the cauſes of a temperature of climate ſo extremely different from that which we experience in countries removed at the ſame diſtance from the oppoſite pole *.

Condition when firſt diſcovered.

AFTER contemplating thoſe permanent and characteriſtic qualities of the American continent, which ariſe from the peculiarity of its ſituation, and the diſpoſition of its parts, the next object that merits attention is its condition when firſt diſcovered, as far as that depended upon the induſtry and operations of man. The effects of human ingenuity and labour are more extenſive and conſiderable, than even our vanity is apt at firſt to imagine. When we ſurvey the face of the habitable globe, no ſmall part of that fertility and beauty, which we aſcribe to the hand of Nature, is the work of man. His efforts, when continued through a ſucceſſion of ages, change the appearance and improve the qualities of the earth. As a great part of the ancient continent has long been occupied by nations far advanced in its arts and induſtry, our eye is accuſtomed to view the earth in that form which it aſſumes when rendered fit to be the reſidence of a numerous race of men, and to ſupply them with nouriſhment.

* See NOTE XXXII.

BUT

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Rude and uncultivated

But in the New World, the ſtate of mankind was ruder, and the aſpect of Nature extremely different. Throughout all its vaſt regions, there were only two monarchies remarkable for extent of territory, or diſtinguiſhed by any progreſs in improvement. The reſt of this continent was poſſeſſed by ſmall independent tribes, deſtitute of arts and induſtry, and neither capable to correct the defects, nor deſirous to meliorate the condition of that part of the earth allotted to them for their habitation. Countries, occupied by ſuch people, were almoſt in the ſame ſtate as if they had been without inhabitants. Immenſe foreſts covered a great part of the uncultivated earth; and as the hand of induſtry had not taught the rivers to run in a proper channel, or drained off the ſtagnating water, many of the moſt fertile plains were overflowed with inundations, or converted into marſhes. In the ſouthern provinces, where the warmth of the ſun, the moiſture of the climate, and the fertility of the ſoil, combine in calling forth the moſt vigorous powers of vegetation, the woods are ſo choked with its rank luxuriance, as to be almoſt impervious, and the ſurface of the ground is hid from the eye under a thick covering of ſhrubs and herbs and weeds. In this ſtate of wild unaſſiſted nature, a great part of the large provinces in South America, which extend from the bottom of the Andes to the ſea, ſtill remain. The European colonies have cleared and cultivated a few ſpots along the coaſt, but the original inhabitants, as rude and indolent as ever, have done nothing to open or improve a country, poſſeſſing almoſt every advantage of ſituation and climate. As we advance towards the northern provinces of America, Nature continues to wear the ſame uncultivated aſpect, and in proportion as the rigour of the climate increaſes, appears more deſolate and horrid. There, the foreſts, though not encumbered with the ſame

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exuberance of vegetation, are of equal extent; prodigious marſhes overſpread the plains, and few marks appear of human activity in any attempt to cultivate or embelliſh the earth. No wonder that the colonies ſent from Europe were aſtoniſhed at their firſt entrance into the New World. It appeared to them waſte, ſolitary, and uninviting. When the Engliſh began to ſettle in America, they termed the countries of which they took poſſeſſion, *The Wilderneſs*. Nothing but their eager expectation of finding mines of gold, could have induced the Spaniards to penetrate through thewoods and marſhes of America, where, at every ſtep, they obſerved the extreme difference between the uncultivated face of Nature, and that which it acquires under the forming hand of induſtry and art *.

Unwholeſome.

The labour and operations of man not only improve and embelliſh the earth, but render it more wholeſome, and friendly to life. When any region lies neglected and deſtitute of cultivation, the air ſtagnates in the woods, putrid exhalations ariſe from the waters; the ſurface of the earth, loaded with rank vegetation, feels not the purifying influence of the ſun; the malignity of the diſtempers natural to the climate increaſes, and new maladies no leſs noxious are engendered. Accordingly, all the provinces of America, when firſt diſcovered, were found to be remarkably unhealthy. This the Spaniards experienced in every expedition into the New World, whether deſtined for conqueſt or ſettlement. Though by the natural conſtitution of their bodies, their habitual temperance, and the perſevering vigour of their minds, they were as much formed as any people in Europe for

* See Note XXXIII.

active

active ſervice in a ſultry climate, they felt ſeverely the fatal and pernicious qualities of thoſe uncultivated regions through which they marched, or where they endeavoured to plant colonies. Great numbers were cut off by the unknown and violent diſeaſes with which they were infected. Such as ſurvived the deſtructive rage of thoſe maladies, were not exempted from the noxious effects of the climate. They returned to Europe, according to the deſcription of the early Spaniſh hiſtorians, feeble, emaciated, with languid looks, and complexions of ſuch a ſickly yellow colour, as indicated the unwholeſome temperature of the countries where they had reſided *.

Its animals.

THE uncultivated ſtate of the New World affected not only the temperature of the air, but the qualities of its productions. The principle of life ſeems to have been leſs active and vigorous there, than in the ancient continent. Notwithſtanding the vaſt extent of America, and the variety of its climates, the different ſpecies of animals peculiar to it are much fewer in proportion, than thoſe of the other hemiſphere. In the iſlands, there were only four kinds of quadrupeds known, the largeſt of which did not exceed the ſize of a rabbit. On the continent, the variety was greater, and though the individuals of each kind could not fail of multiplying exceedingly, when almoſt unmoleſted by men, who were neither ſo numerous, nor ſo united in ſociety, as to be formidable enemies to the animal creation, the number of diſtinct ſpecies muſt be conſidered as extremely ſmall. Of two hundred different kinds of animals ſpread over the face of the earth, only about one third exiſted

* Gomara Hiſt. c. 20. 22. Oviedo Hiſt. lib. ii. c. 13. lib. v. c. 10. P. Martyr, Epiſt. 545. Decad. p. 176.

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in America, at the time of its discovery *. Nature was not only less prolific in the New World, but she appears likewise to have been less vigorous in her productions. The animals originally belonging to this quarter of the globe appear to be of an inferior race, neither so robust, nor so fierce, as those of the other continent. America gives birth to no creature of such bulk as to be compared with the elephant or rhinoceros, or that equals the lyon and tyger in strength and ferocity †. The *Tapyr* of Brasil, the quadruped of the first magnitude in the New World, is not larger than a calf of six months old. The *Puma* and *Jaguar*, its fiercest beasts of prey, which the Europeans have inaccurately denominated lyons and tygers, possess neither the undaunted courage of the former, nor the ravenous cruelty of the latter ‡. They are inactive and timid, hardly formidable to man, and often turn their backs upon the least appearance of resistance ‖. The same qualities in the climate of America which stinted the growth, and enfeebled the spirit, of its native animals, have proved pernicious to such as have migrated into it voluntarily from the other continent, or have been transported thither by the Europeans §. The bears, the wolves, the deer of America, are not equal in size to those of the Old World ¶. Most of the domestic animals, with which the Europeans stored the provinces wherein they settled, have degenerated with respect to bulk or quality,

* Buffon Hist. Naturelle, tom. ix. p. 86. † See NOTE XXXIV. ‡ Buffon Hist. Natur. tom. ix. p. 87. Margravii Hist. Nat. Brasil, p. 229. ‖ Buffon Hist. Natur. ix. 13. 203. Acosta Hist. lib. iv. c. 34. Pisonis Hist. p. 6. Herrera, dec. 4. lib. iv. c. 1. lib. x. c. 13.

§ Churchill, v. p. 691. Ovalle Relat. of Chili Church. iii. p. 10. Sommario de Oviedo, c. 14---22. Voyage du Des Marchais, iii. 299. ¶ Buffon Hist. Natur. ix. 103. Kalm Travels, i. 202. Biet Voy. de France Equinox, p. 339.

in

in a country whose temperature and soil seem to be less favourable to the strength and perfection of the animal creation *.

Insects and reptiles.

The same causes which checked the growth and the vigour of the more noble animals, were friendly to the propagation and increase of reptiles and insects. Though this is not peculiar to the New World, and those odious tribes, the offspring of heat, moisture, and corruption, infest every part of the torrid zone; they multiply faster, perhaps, in America, and grow to a more monstrous bulk. As this country is, on the whole less cultivated, and less peopled, than the other quarters of the earth, the active principle of life wastes its force in productions of this inferior form. The air is often darkened with clouds of insects, and the ground covered with shocking and noxious reptiles. The country around Porto-Bello swarms with toads in such multitudes, as hide the surface of the earth. At Guyaquil, snakes and vipers are hardly less numerous. Carthagena is infested with numerous flocks of bats, which annoy not only the cattle but inhabitants †. In the islands, legions of ants have, at different times, consumed every vegetable production ‡, and left the earth entirely bare, as if it had been burnt with fire. The damp forests, and rank soil of the countries on the banks of the Orinoco and Maragnon, teem with almost every offensive and poisonous creature, which the power of a sultry sun can quicken into life §.

* See NOTE XXXV.

† Voyage de Ulloa, tom. i. p. 89. Id. p. 147. Herrera, dec. 11. lib. iii. c. 3. 19.

‡ See NOTE XXXVI.

§ Voyage de Condamine, p. 167. Gumilla, iii. 120, &c. Hist. gener. des Voyages, xiv. 317. Dumont Memoires sur la Louisiane, i. 108. Sommario de Oviedo, c. 52—62.

The

BOOK IV. Birds.

THE birds of the New World are not diſtinguiſhed by qualities ſo conſpicuous and characteriſtical, as thoſe which we have obſerved in its quadrupeds. Birds are more independent of man, and leſs affected by the changes which induſtry and labour make upon the ſtate of the earth. They have a greater propenſity to migrate from one country to another, and can gratify this inſtinct of their nature without difficulty or danger. Hence the number of birds common to both continents is much greater than that of quadrupeds; and even ſuch as are peculiar to America nearly reſemble thoſe with which mankind were acquainted in ſimilar regions of the ancient hemiſphere. The American birds of the torrid zone, like thoſe of the ſame climate in Aſia and Africa, are decked in plumage, which dazzles the eye with the vivid beauty of its colours; but nature, ſatisfied with cloathing them in this gay dreſs, has denied moſt of them that melody of ſound, and variety of notes, which catches and delights the ear. The birds of the temperate climates, there, in the ſame manner as in our continent, are leſs ſplendid in their appearance, but, in compenſation for that defect, have all the power and ſweetneſs of muſic in their voice. In ſome diſtricts of America, the unwholeſome temperature of the air ſeems to be unfavourable even to this part of the creation. The number of birds is leſs than in other countries, and the traveller is ſtruck with the amazing ſolitude and ſilence of its foreſts*. It is remarkable, however, that America, where the quadrupeds are ſo dwarfiſh and daſtardly, ſhould produce the *Condor*, which is in-

* Bouguer Voy. au Perou, 17. Chanvalon, Voyage a la Martinique, p. 96. Warren Deſcript. Surinam. Oſborn's Collect. ii. 924. Lettres Edif. xxiv. p. 339. Charlev. Hiſt. de la Nouv. France, iii. 155.

titled

titled to pre-eminence over all the flying tribe, in bulk, in ſtrength, and in courage *. BOOK IV.

Soil.

THE ſoil, in a continent ſo extenſive as America, muſt of courſe be extremely various. In each of its provinces, we ſhall find ſome diſtinguiſhing peculiarity, the deſcription of which belongs to thoſe who write their particular hiſtory. In general, we may obſerve, that the moiſture and cold, which predominate ſo remarkably in all parts of America, muſt have great influence upon the nature of its ſoil; countries lying in the ſame parallel with thoſe regions which never feel the extreme rigour of winter in the ancient continent, are frozen over in America during a great part of the year. Chilled by this intenſe cold, the ground never acquires warmth ſufficient to ripen the fruits, which are found in the correſponding parts of the other continent. If we would rear in America the productions which abound in any particular diſtrict of the world, we muſt advance ſeveral degrees nearer to the line than in the other hemiſphere, as it requires ſuch an increaſe of heat to counterbalance the natural frigidity of the ſoil and climate †. At the Cape of Good Hope, ſeveral of their plants, and fruits peculiar to the countries within the tropics, are cultivated with ſucceſs; whereas, at St. Auguſtine, in Florida, and Charles-Town, in South-Carolina, though conſiderably nearer to the line, they cannot be brought to thrive with equal certainty ‡. But, if allowance be made for this diverſity, the ſoil of America is naturally as rich and fertile as in any part of the earth. As the country was thinly inhabited, and by

* Voyage de Ulloa, i. 363. Voyage de Condamine, 175. Buffon Hiſt. Nat. xvi. 184. Voyage du Des Marchais, iii. 320. † See NOTE XXXVII. ‡ See NOTE XXXVIII.

a people

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a people of little induſtry, who had none of the domeſtic animals, which civilized nations rear in ſuch vaſt numbers, the earth was not exhauſted by their conſumption. The vegetable productions, to which its fertility gave birth, often remained untouched, and being ſuffered to corrupt on its ſurface, returned with increaſe into its boſom *. As trees and plants derive a great part of their nouriſhment from air and water, if they were not deſtroyed by man and other animals, they would render to the earth more, perhaps, than they take from it, and feed rather than impoveriſh it. Thus the unoccupied ſoil of America, might go on enriching for many ages. The vaſt number as well as enormous ſize of the trees in America, indicate, the extraordinary vigour of the ſoil in its native ſtate. When the Europeans firſt began to cultivate the New World, they were aſtoniſhed at the luxuriant power of vegetation in its virgin mould; and in ſeveral places the ingenuity of the planter is ſtill employed in diminiſhing and waſting its ſuperfluous fertility, in order to bring it down to a ſtate fit for uſeful culture. *

How was America peopled?

HAVING thus ſurveyed the ſtate of the New World at the time of its diſcovery, and conſidered the peculiar features and qualities which diſtinguiſh and characteriſe it, the next inquiry that merits attention is, How was America peopled? By what courſe did mankind migrate from the one continent to the other? and in what quarter is it moſt probable that a communication was opened between them?

* Buffon, Hiſt. Natur. i. 242. Kalm, i. 151.

† Charlevoix, Hiſt. de Nouv. Fran. iii. 405. Voyage du Des Marchais. iii. 229. Lery ap. De Bry, part iii. p. 174. See NOTE XXXIX.

No tradition concerning it among themſelves.

We know, with infallible certainty, that all the human race ſpring from the ſame ſource, and that the deſcendants of one man, under the protection as well as in obedience to the command of Heaven, multiplied and repleniſhed the earth. But neither the annals nor the traditions of nations reach back to thoſe remote ages, in which they took poſſeſſion of the different countries where they are now ſettled. We cannot trace the branches of this firſt family, or point out with certainty the time and manner in which they divided and ſpread over the face of the globe. Even among the moſt enlightened people, the period of authentic hiſtory is extremely ſhort, and every thing prior to that is fabulous or obſcure. It is not ſurpriſing, then, that the unlettered inhabitants of America, who have no ſolicitude about futurity, and little curioſity concerning what is paſt, ſhould be altogether unacquainted with their own original. The Californians and Eſkimaux, in particular, who occupy thoſe countries in America which approach neareſt to the ancient continent, are ſo remarkably rude, that it is altogether vain to ſearch among them for ſuch information as might diſcover the place from whence they came, or the anceſtors of whom they are deſcended *. Whatever light has been thrown on this ſubject, is derived, not from the natives of America, but from the inquiſitive genius of their conquerors.

Various theories.

When the people of Europe unexpectedly diſcovered a New World, removed at a vaſt diſtance from every part of the antient continent which was then known, and filled with inhabitants whoſe appearance and manners differed remarkably from the reſt of the human ſpecies, the queſtion concerning their original became

* Venegas Hiſt. of California, i. 60.

naturally

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naturally an object of curiosity and attention. The theories and speculations of ingenious men with respect to this subject, would fill many volumes; but are often so wild and chimerical, that I should offer an insult to the understanding of my readers, if I attempted either to enumerate or to refute them. Some have presumptuously imagined, that the people of America were not the offspring of the same common parent with the rest of mankind, but that they formed a separate race of men distinguishable by peculiar features in the constitution of their bodies, as well as in the characteristic qualities of their minds. Others contend, that they are descended from some remnant of the antediluvian inhabitants of the earth, who survived the deluge, which swept away the greatest part of the human species in the days of Noah; and preposterously suppose rude, uncivilized tribes, scattered over an uncultivated continent, to be the most ancient race of people on the earth. There is hardly any nation from the north to the south pole, to which some antiquary, in the extravagance of conjecture, has not ascribed the honour of peopling America. The Jews, the Canaanites, the Phœnicians, the Carthaginians, the Greeks, the Scythians, in antient times are supposed to have settled in this western world. The Chinese, the Swedes, the Norwegians, the Welsh, the Spaniards, are said to have sent colonies thither in later ages, at different periods, and on various occasions. Zealous advocates stand forth to support the respective claims of those people; and though they rest upon no better foundation than the casual resemblance of some customs, or the supposed affinity between a few words in their different languages, much erudition and more zeal have been employed, to little purpose, in defence of the opposite systems. Those regions of conjecture and controversy belong

long not to the hiſtorian. His is a more limited province, confined to what is eſtabliſhed by certain or highly probable evidence. Beyond this I ſhall not venture, in offering a few obſervations, which may contribute to throw ſome light upon this curious and much agitated queſtion.

Ought not to be founded on mere conjecture,

1. THERE are authors who have endeavoured by mere conjectures to account for the peopling of America. Some have ſuppoſed that it was originally united to the antient continent, and disjoined from it by the ſhock of an earthquake, or the irruption of a deluge. Others have imagined, that ſome veſſel being forced from its courſe by the violonce of a weſterly wind, might be driven by accident towards the American coaſt, and have given a beginning to population in that deſolate continent *. But with reſpect to all thoſe ſyſtems, it is vain either to reaſon or inquire, becauſe it is impoſſible to come to any deciſion. Such events as they ſuppoſe are barely poſſible, and may have happened. That they ever did happen, we have no evidence, either from the clear teſtimony of hiſtory, or from the obſcure intimations of tradition.

or on reſemblance of manners.

2. NOTHING can be more frivolous or uncertain than the attempts to diſcover the original of the Americans, merely by tracing the reſemblance between their manners and thoſe of any particular people in the antient continent. If we ſuppoſe two bodies of men, though in the moſt remote regions of the globe, to be placed in a ſtate of ſociety ſimilar in its degree of improve-

* Parſons Remains of Japhet, p. 240. Ancient Univerſ. Hiſt. vol. xx. p. 164. P. Feyjoo Teatro Critico, tom. v. p. 304, &c. Acoſta Hiſt. Moral. Novi Orbis, lib. i. c. 16, 19.

ment,

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ment, they must feel the same wants, and exert the same endeavours to supply them. The same objects will allure, the same passions will animate them, and the same ideas and sentiments will arise in their minds. The character and occupations of the hunter in America must be little different from those of an Asiatic, who depends for subsistence on the chace. A tribe of savages on the banks of the Danube must nearly resemble one upon the plains washed by the Mississippi. Instead then of presuming, from this similarity, that there is any affinity between them, we should only conclude, that the disposition and manners of men are formed by their situation, and arise from the state of society in which they live. The moment that begins to vary, the character of a people must change. In proportion as it advances in improvement, their manners refine, their powers and talents are called forth. In every part of the earth the progress of man hath been nearly the same, and we can trace him in his career from the rude simplicity of savage life, until he attains the industry, the arts, and the elegance of polished society. There is nothing wonderful then in the similitude between the Americans and the barbarous nations of our continent. Had Lafitau, Garcia, and many other authors, attended to this, they would not have perplexed a subject which they pretend to illustrate, by their fruitless endeavours to establish an affinity between various races of people in the old and new continents, upon no other evidence than such a resemblance in their manners as necessarily arises from the similarity of their condition. There are, it is true, among every people some customs, which, as they do not flow from any natural want or desire peculiar to their situation, may be denominated usages of arbitrary institution. If between two nations settled in remote

parts

parts of the earth, a perfect agreement with respect to any of these should be discovered, one might be led to suspect that they were connected by some affinity. If a nation were found in America that consecrated the seventh day to religious rest, if in another the first appearance of a new moon was celebrated with festivity, we might justly suppose that the former had derived its knowledge of this usage of arbitrary institution from the Jews, while the latter might be considered as nothing more than an expression of joy natural to man on the return of the planet which guides and cheers him in the night. The instances of customs, merely arbitrary, common to the inhabitants of both hemispheres, are, indeed, so few, and so equivocal, that no theory concerning the population of the New World ought to be founded upon them.

or of religious rites.

3. The theories which have been formed with respect to the original of the Americans, from observation of their religious rites and practices, are no less fanciful, and destitute of solid foundation. When the religious opinions of any people are neither the result of rational inquiry, nor derived from the instructions of revelation, they must needs be wild and extravagant. Barbarous nations are incapable of the former, and have not been blessed with the advantages arising from the latter. Still, however, the human mind, even where its operations appear most wild and capricious, holds a course so regular, that in every age and country the dominion of particular passions will be attended with similar effects. The savage of Europe or America, when filled with superstitious dread of invisible beings, or with inquisitive solicitude to penetrate into the events of futurity, trembles alike with fear, or glows with impatience. He has recourse to rites and practices

of

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of the ſame kind, in order to avert the vengeance which he ſuppoſes to be impending over him, or to divine the ſecret which is the object of his curioſity. Accordingly, the ritual of ſuperſtition, in one continent, ſeems, in many particulars, to be a tranſcript of that eſtabliſhed in the other, and both authoriſe ſimilar inſtitutions, ſometimes ſo frivolous as to excite pity, ſometimes ſo bloody and barbarous as to create horror. But without ſuppoſing any conſanguinity between ſuch diſtant nations, or imagining that their religious ceremonies were conveyed by tradition from the one to the other, we may aſcribe this uniformity, which in many inſtances ſeems very amazing, to the natural operation of ſuperſtition and enthuſiaſm upon the weakneſs of the human mind.

Not peopled by any nation highly civilized.

4. We may lay it down as a certain principle in this inquiry, that America was not peopled by any nations of the antient continent, which had made conſiderable progreſs in civilization. The inhabitants of the New World were in a ſtate of ſociety ſo extremely rude, as to be unacquainted with thoſe arts which are the firſt eſſays of human ingenuity in its advance towards improvement. Even the moſt cultivated nations of America were ſtrangers to many of thoſe ſimple inventions, which were almoſt coeval with ſociety in other parts of the world, and were known in the earlieſt periods of civil life. From this it is manifeſt, that the tribes which originally migrated to America, came off from nations which muſt have been no leſs barbarous than their poſterity, at the time when they were firſt diſcovered by the Europeans. For, although the elegant and refined arts may decline or periſh, amidſt the violent ſhocks of thoſe revolutions and diſaſters to which nations are expoſed, the neceſſary arts of life, when once they have been introduced among any people, are never loſt.

None

None of the viciſſitudes in human affairs affect theſe, and they continue to be practiſed as long as the race of men exiſts. If ever the uſe of iron had been known to the ſavages in America, or to their progenitors, if ever they had employed a plough, a loom, or a forge, the utility of theſe inventions would have preſerved them, and it is impoſſible that they ſhould have been abandoned or forgotten. We may conclude then, that the Americans ſprung from ſome people, who were themſelves in ſuch an early and unimproved ſtage of ſociety, as to be unacquainted with all the neceſſary arts which remained unknown among their poſterity.

nor from the ſouthern regions of our continent.

5. It appears no leſs evident, that America was not peopled by any colony from the more ſouthern nations of the ancient continent. None of the rude tribes ſettled in that part of our hemiſphere can be ſuppoſed to have viſited a country ſo remote. They poſſeſſed neither enterpriſe, nor ingenuity, nor power, that could prompt them to undertake, or enable them to perform, ſuch a diſtant voyage. That the more civilized nations in Aſia or Africa are not the progenitors of the Americans is manifeſt, not only from the obſervations which I have already made concerning their ignorance of the moſt ſimple and neceſſary arts, but from an additional circumſtance. Whenever any people have experienced the advantages which men enjoy, by their dominion over the inferior animals, they can neither ſubſiſt without the nouriſhment which they afford, nor carry on their operations independent of their miniſtry and labour. Accordingly, the firſt care of the Spaniards when they ſettled in America, was to ſtock it with all the domeſtic animals of Europe, and if prior to them, the Tyrians, the Carthaginians, the Chineſe, or any other poliſhed people, had taken poſſeſſion of that continent,

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tinent, we ſhould have found there the animals peculiar to thoſe regions of the globe where they were originally ſeated. In all America, however, there is not one animal, tame or wild, which properly belongs to the warm, or even the more temperate countries of the ancient continent. The camel, the dromedary, the horſe, the cow, were as much unknown in America, as the elephant or the lion. From which it is obvious, that the people who firſt ſettled in the weſtern world did not iſſue from the countries where thoſe animals abound, and where men, from having been long accuſtomed to their aid, would naturally conſider it, not only as beneficial, but as indiſpenſably neceſſary to the improvement, and even the preſervation, of civil ſociety.

The two continents ſeem to be moſt contiguous towards the north.

6. From conſidering the animals with which America is ſtored, we may conclude that the neareſt point of contact between the old and new continents is towards the northern extremity of both, and that there the communication was opened, and the intercourſe carried on between them. All the extenſive countries in America which lie within the tropics, or approach near to them, are filled with indigenous animals of various kinds, entirely different from thoſe in the correſponding regions of the ancient continent. But the northern provinces of the New World abound with many of the wild animals which are common in ſuch parts of our hemiſphere as lie in a ſimilar ſituation. The bear, the wolf, the fox, the hare, the deer, the elk, and ſeveral other ſpecies frequent the foreſts of North America, no leſs than thoſe in the north of Europe and Aſia *. It ſeems to be evi-

* Buffon Hiſt. Nat. ix. p. 97, &c.

dent

dent then, that the two continents approach each other in this quarter, and are either united, or ſo nearly adjacent, that theſe animals might paſs from the one to the other.

This aſcertained by diſcovery.

7. THE actual vicinity of the two continents is ſo clearly eſtabliſhed by modern diſcoveries, as removes the chief difficulty with reſpect to the peopling of America. While thoſe immenſe regions which ſtretched eaſtward from the river Oby to the ſea of Kamchatka were unknown, or imperfectly explored, the north eaſt extremities of our hemiſphere were ſuppoſed to be ſo far diſtant from any part of the New World, that it was not eaſy to conceive how any communication ſhould have been carried on between them. But the Ruſſians, having ſubjected the weſtern part of Siberia to their empire, gradually extended their knowledge of that vaſt country, by advancing towards the eaſt into unknown provinces. Theſe were diſcovered by hunters in their excurſions after game, or by ſoldiers employed in levying the taxes, and the court of Moſcow eſtimated the importance of thoſe countries only by the ſmall addition which they made to its revenue. At length, Peter the Great aſcended the Ruſſian throne. His enlightened, comprehenſive mind, intent upon every circumſtance that could aggrandize his empire, or render his reign illuſtrious, diſcerned conſequences of thoſe diſcoveries, which had eſcaped the obſervation of his ignorant predeceſſors. He perceived, that in proportion as the regions of Aſia extended towards the eaſt, they muſt approach nearer to America; that the communication between the two continents, which had long been ſearched for in vain, would probably be found in this quarter, and that by opening this intercourſe, ſome part of the wealth and commerce of the weſtern world might be made to flow into his domi-

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nions by a new channel. Such an object ſuited a genius that delighted in grand ſchemes. Peter drew up inſtructions with his own hand for proſecuting this deſign, and gave orders for carrying it into execution *.

His ſucceſſors adopted his ideas, and purſued his plan. The officers whom the Ruſſian court employed in this ſervice, had to ſtruggle with ſo many difficulties, that their progreſs was extremely ſlow. Encouraged by ſome faint traditions among the people of Siberia, concerning a ſucceſsful voyage in the year one thouſand ſix hundred and forty-eight, round the north-eaſt promontory of Aſia, they attempted to follow the ſame courſe. Veſſels were fitted out, wih this view, at different times, from the rivers Lena and Kolyma; but in a frozen ocean, which nature ſeems not to have deſtined for navigation, they were expoſed to many diſaſters, without being able to accompliſh their purpoſe. No veſſel fitted out by the Ruſſian court ever doubled this formidable Cape †; we are indebted for what is known of thoſe extreme regions of Aſia, to the diſcoveries made in excurſions by land. In all thoſe provinces, an opinion prevails, that countries of great extent and fertility lie at no conſiderable diſtance from their own coaſts. Theſe the Ruſſians imagined to be part of America; and ſeveral circumſtances concurred not only in confirming them in this belief, but in perſuading them that ſome portion of that continent could not be very remote. Trees of various kinds, unknown in thoſe naked regions of Aſia, are driven upon the coaſt by an eaſterly wind. By the ſame wind, floating ice is brought thither in a few days; flights of birds arrive annually from the

* Muller Voyages et Decouvertes par les Ruſſes, tom. i. p. 4, 5. 141.

† See NOTE XL.

ſame

ſame quarter; and a tradition obtains among the inhabitants, of an intercourſe formerly carried on with ſome countries ſituated to the eaſt.

AFTER weighing all theſe particulars, and comparing the poſition of the countries in Aſia which they had diſcovered, with ſuch parts in the north-weſt of America as were already known, the Ruſſian court formed a plan, which would have hardly occurred to any nation leſs accuſtomed to engage in arduous undertakings, and to contend with great difficulties. Orders were iſſued to build two veſſels at Ochotz, in the ſea of Kamchatka, to ſail on a voyage of diſcovery. Though that dreary uncultivated region furniſhed nothing that could be of uſe in conſtructing them, but ſome larch trees; though not only the iron, the cordage, the ſails, and all the numerous articles requiſite for their equipment, but the proviſions for victualling them, were to be carried through the immenſe deſarts of Siberia, along rivers of difficult navigation, and roads almoſt impaſſable, the mandate of the ſovereign, and the perſeverance of the people, at laſt ſurmounted every obſtacle. Two veſſels were finiſhed, and, under the command of the captains Behring and Tſchirikow, ſailed from Kamchatka in queſt of the New World, in a quarter where it had never been approached. They ſhaped their courſe towards the eaſt; and tho' a ſtorm ſoon ſeparated the veſſels, which never rejoined, and many diſaſters befel them, the expectations from the voyage were not altogether fruſtrated. Each of the commanders diſcovered land, which to them appeared to be part of the American continent; and, according to their obſervations, it ſeems to be ſituated within a few degrees of the north-weſt coaſt of California. Each ſet ſome of his people aſhore; but in one

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place the inhabitants fled as the Ruſſians approached; in another, they carried off thoſe who landed, and deſtroyed their boats. The violence of the weather, and the diſtreſs of their crews obliged both to quit this inhoſpitable coaſt. In their return they touched at ſeveral iſlands, which ſtretch in a chain from eaſt to weſt between the country which they had diſcovered and the coaſt of Aſia. They had ſome intercourſe with the natives, who ſeemed to them to reſemble the North Americans. They preſented to the Ruſſians the *calumet*, or pipe of peace, which is a ſymbol of friendſhip univerſal among the people of North America, and an uſage of arbitrary inſtitution, peculiar to them.

THE iſlands of this new Archipelago have been frequented by the Ruſſian hunters ſince that time; but the court ſeemed to have relinquiſhed its ſcheme of proſecuting diſcoveries in this quarter. It was unexpectedly reſumed in the year one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſixty-eight, and captain Krenitzin had the command of two ſmall veſſels fitted out for that purpoſe. In his voyage outward he held nearly the ſame courſe with the former navigators, he touched at the ſame iſlands, obſerved their ſituations and productions more carefully, and diſcovered ſeveral new iſlands, with which they had not fallen in. Though he did not proceed ſo far to the eaſt as to reviſit the country which Behring and Tſchirikow ſuppoſed to be part of the American continent, yet, by returning in a courſe conſiderably to the north of theirs, he corrected ſome capital miſtakes into which they had fallen, and contributed to facilitate the progreſs of future navigators in thoſe ſeas *.

* See NOTE XLI.

THUS

THUS the poſſibility of a communication between the continents in this quarter reſts no longer upon mere conjecture, but is eſtabliſhed by undoubted evidence *. Some tribe, or ſome families of wandering Tartars, from the reſtleſs ſpirit peculiar to their race, might migrate to the neareſt iſlands, and, rude as their knowledge of navigation then was, might, by paſſing from one to the other, reach at length the coaſt of America, and give a beginning to population in that continent. The diſtance between the Marian or Ladrone iſlands and the neareſt land in Aſia, is greater than that between the part of America which the Ruſſians diſcovered, and the coaſt of Kamchatka; and yet the inhabitants of thoſe iſlands are manifeſtly of Aſiatic extract. If, notwithſtanding their remote ſituation, we admit that the Marian iſlands were peopled from our continent, diſtance alone is no reaſon why we ſhould heſitate about admitting that the original of the Americans may be from the ſame ſource. It is probable that future navigators in thoſe ſeas, by ſteering farther to the north, may find that the continent of America approaches ſtill nearer to Aſia. According to the information of the barbarous people, who inhabit the country about the north-eaſt promontory of Aſia, there lies, off the coaſt, a ſmall iſland, to which they ſail in leſs than a day. From that, they can deſcry a large continent, which, according to their deſcription, is covered with foreſts, and poſſeſſed by people whoſe language they do not underſtand ‡. By them they are ſupplied with the ſkins of martens, an animal unknown in the northern parts of Siberia, and which is never found but in countries abounding with trees. If we could rely on this account, we might conclude that the American continent is ſe-

* Muller's Voyages, tom. i. 248, &c. 267. 276.

‡ Muller's Voy. et Decouv. i. 166.

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parated from ours only by a narrow ſtrait, and all the difficulties with reſpect to the communication between them would vaniſh. Perhaps the merit of aſcertaining this is reſerved for the ſovereign now ſeated on the throne of Peter the Great, who, by perfecting his plan, may add this ſplendid event to thoſe which already diſtinguiſh her reign.

Another communication by the north-weſt.

It is likewiſe evident from recent diſcoveries, that an intercourſe between our continent and America might be carried on with no leſs facility from the north-weſt extremities of Europe. As early

A. D. 830. as the ninth century, the Norwegians diſcovered Greenland, and planted colonies there. The communication with that country, after a long interruption, was renewed in the laſt century. Some Lutheran and Moravian miſſionaries, prompted by zeal for propagating the Chriſtian faith, have ventured to ſettle in this frozen and uncultivated region *. To them we are indebted for much curious information with reſpect to its nature and inhabitants. We learn, that the north-weſt coaſt of Greenland is ſeparated from America by a very narrow ſtrait; that, at the bottom of the bay into which this ſtrait conducts, it is highly probable that they are united †; that the inhabitants of the two countries have intercourſe with one another; that the Eſquimaux in America perfectly reſemble the Greenlanders in their aſpect, dreſs, and mode of living; that ſome ſailors, who had acquired the knowledge of a few words in the Greenlandiſh language, reported that theſe were

A. D. 1764. underſtood by the Eſquimaux; that, at length, a Moravian miſſionary, well acquainted with the language of Greenland, having viſited the country of the Eſquimaux, found, to his aſtoniſhment,

* Crantz Hiſt. of Greenl. i. 242. 244. Prevot Hiſt. Gen. des Voyages, tom. xv. 152, not. (96). † Eggede, p. 2, 3.

that

that they ſpoke the ſame language with the Greenlanders, and were in every reſpect the ſame people, and he was accordingly received and entertained by them as a friend and a brother *.

By theſe deciſive facts, not only the conſanguinity of the Eſquimaux and Greenlanders is eſtabliſhed, but the poſſibility of peopling America from the north of Europe is demonſtrated. If the Norwegians, in a barbarous age, when ſcience had not begun to dawn in the north of Europe, poſſeſſed ſuch naval ſkill as to open a communication with Greenland, their anceſtors, as much addicted to roving by ſea, as the Tartars are to wandering by land, might at ſome more remote period, accompliſh the ſame voyage, and ſettle a colony there, whoſe deſcendents might, in progreſs of time, migrate into America. But if, inſtead of venturing to ſail directly from their own coaſt to Greenland, we ſuppoſe that the Norwegians held a more cautious courſe, and advanced from Shetland to the Feroe Iſlands, and from them to Iceland, in all which they had planted colonies, their progreſs may have been ſo gradual, that this navigation cannot be conſidered as either longer or more hazardous, than thoſe voyages which that hardy and enterpriſing race of men is known to have performed in every age.

Probably peopled from the north-eaſt.

8. THOUGH it be poſſible that America may have received its firſt inhabitants from our continent, either by the north-weſt of Europe or the north-eaſt of Aſia, there ſeems to be good reaſon for ſuppoſing that the progenitors of all the American nations, from Cape Horn to the ſouthern confines of Labrador, migrated from the lat-

* Crantz Hiſt. of Greenl. p. 261, 262.

ter

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ter rather than the former. The Eſquimaux are the only people in America, who, in their aſpect or character, bear any reſemblance to the northern Europeans. They are manifeſtly a ſeparate ſpecies of men, diſtinct from all the nations of that continent, in language, in diſpoſition, and in habits of life. Their original, then, may warrantably be traced up to that ſource which I have pointed out. But, among all the other inhabitants of America, there is ſuch a ſtriking ſimilitude in the form of their bodies, and the qualities of their minds, that, notwithſtanding the diverſities occaſioned by the influence of climate, or unequal progreſs in improvement, we muſt pronounce them to be deſcended from one ſource. There may be a variety in the ſhades, but we can every where trace the ſame original colour. Each tribe has ſomething peculiar which diſtinguiſhes it, but in all of them we diſcern certain features common to the whole race. It is remarkable, that in every peculiarity, whether in perſons or diſpoſitions, which characteriſe the Americans, they have ſome reſemblance to the rude tribes ſcattered over the north-eaſt of Aſia, but almoſt none to the nations ſettled in the northern extremities of Europe. We may, therefore, refer them to the former origin, and conclude that their Aſiatic progenitor, having ſettled in thoſe parts of America, where the Ruſſians have diſcovered the proximity of the two continents, ſpread gradually over its various regions. This account of the progreſs of population in America, coincides with the traditions of the Mexicans concerning their own origin, which, imperfect as they are, were preſerved with more accuracy, and merit greater credit, than thoſe of any people in the New World. According to them, their anceſtors came from a remote country, ſituated to the north-eaſt of Mexico. They point out their various

various ſtations as they advanced from this, into the interior provinces, and it is preciſely the ſame route which they muſt have held, if they had been emigrants from Aſia. The Mexicans, in deſcribing the appearance of their progenitors, their manners, and habits of life at that period, exactly delineate thoſe of the rude Tartars, from whom I ſuppoſe them to have ſprung *.

THUS have I finiſhed a diſquiſition which has been deemed of ſo much importance, that it would have been improper to omit it in writing the hiſtory of America. I have ventured to inquire, but without preſuming to decide. Satisfied with offering conjectures, I pretend not to eſtabliſh any ſyſtem. When an inveſtigation is, from its nature, ſo intricate and obſcure, that it is impoſſible to arrive at concluſions which are certain, there may be ſome merit in pointing out ſuch as are probable †.

Condition and character of the Americans.

THE condition and character of the American nations, at the time when they became known to the Europeans, deſerve more attentive conſideration, than the inquiry concerning their original. The latter is merely an object of curioſity, the former is one of the moſt important as well as inſtructive reſearches, which can occupy the philoſopher or hiſtorian. In order to complete the hiſtory of the human mind, and attain to a perfect knowledge of its nature and operations, we muſt contemplate man in all thoſe various ſituations wherein he has been placed. We muſt follow him in his progreſs through the different

* Acoſta Hiſt. Nat. & Mor. lib. vii. c. 2, &c. Garcia Origen de los Indios, lib. v. c. 3. Torquemada Monar. Ind. lib. i. c. 2, &c. Boturini Benaduci Idea de una Hiſt. de la Amer. Septentr. § xvii. p. 127.

† Memoires ſur la Louiſiane, par Dumont, tom. i. p. 119.

ſtages

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ſtages of ſociety, as he gradually advances from the infant ſtate of civil life towards its maturity and decline. We muſt obſerve at each period, how the faculties of his underſtanding unfold, we muſt attend to the efforts of his active powers, watch the motions of affection as they riſe in his breaſt, and mark whither they tend, and with what ardour they are exerted. The philoſophers and hiſtorians of ancient Greece and Rome, our guides in this as well as every other diſquiſition, had only a limited view of this ſubject, as they had hardly any opportunity of ſurveying man in his rudeſt and moſt early ſtate. In all thoſe regions of the earth with which they were acquainted, civil ſociety had made conſiderable advances, and nations had finiſhed a good part of their career before they began to obſerve them. The Scythians and Germans, the rudeſt people of whom any antient author has tranſmitted to us an authentic account, poſſeſſed flocks and herds, had acquired property of various kinds, and, when compared with mankind in their primitive ſtate, may be reckoned to have attained to a great degree of civilization.

Leſs improved than in any part of the earth.

BUT the diſcovery of the New World enlarged the ſphere of contemplation, and preſented nations to our view, in ſtages of their progreſs, much leſs advanced than thoſe wherein they have been obſerved in our continent. In America man appears under the rudeſt form in which we can conceive him to ſubſiſt. We behold communities juſt beginning to unite, and may examine the ſentiments and actions of human beings in the infancy of ſocial life, while they feel but imperfectly the force of its ties, and have ſcarcely relinquiſhed their native liberty. That ſtate of primæval ſimplicity, which was known in our continent only by the fanciful deſcription of poets, really exiſted

iſted in the other. The greater part of its inhabitants were ſtrangers to induſtry and labour, ignorant of arts, and almoſt unacquainted with property, enjoying in common the bleſſings which flowed ſpontaneouſly from the bounty of nature. There were only two nations in this vaſt continent which had emerged from this rude ſtate, and had made any conſiderable progreſs in acquiring the ideas, and adopting the inſtitutions, which belonged to poliſhed ſocieties. Their government and manners will fall naturally under our review in relating the diſcovery and conqueſt of the Mexican and Peruvian empires; and we ſhall have there an opportunity of contemplating the Americans in the ſtate of the higheſt improvement to which they ever attained.

This inquiry confined to the rudeſt tribes.

AT preſent, our attention and reſearches ſhall be turned to the ſmall independent tribes which occupied every other part of America. Among theſe, though with ſome diverſity in their character, their manners and inſtitutions, the ſtate of ſociety was nearly ſimilar, and ſo extremely rude, that the denomination of *Savage* may be applied to them all. In a general hiſtory of America, it would be highly improper to deſcribe the condition of each petty community, or to inveſtigate every minute circumſtance which contributes to form the character of its members. Such an inquiry would lead to details of immeaſurable and tireſome extent. The qualities belonging to the people of all the different tribes have ſuch a near reſemblance, that they may be painted with the ſame features. Where any circumſtances ſeem to conſtitute a diverſity in their character and manners worthy of attention, it will be ſufficient to point theſe out as they occur, and to inquire into the cauſes of ſuch peculiarities.

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Difficulty of obtaining information,

IT is extremely difficult to procure ſatisfying and authentic information, concerning nations while they remained uncivilized. To diſcover their true character under this rude form, and to collect the features by which they are diſtinguiſhed, requires an obſerver poſſeſſed of no leſs impartiality than diſcernment. For, in every ſtage of ſociety, the faculties, the ſentiments and deſires of men are ſo accommodated to their own ſtate, that they become ſtandards of excellence to themſelves, they affix the idea of perfection and happineſs to thoſe attainments which reſemble their own, and whereever the objects and enjoyments to which they have been accuſtomed are wanting, confidently pronounce a people barbarous and miſerable. Hence the mutual contempt with which the members of communities, unequal in their degrees of improvement, regard each other. Poliſhed nations, conſcious of the advantages which they derive from their knowledge and arts, are apt to view rude nations with peculiar ſcorn, and, in the pride of ſuperiority, will hardly allow either their occupations, their feelings, or their pleaſures, to be worthy of men. It has ſeldom been the lot of communities, in their early and unpoliſhed ſtate, to fall under the obſervation of perſons, endowed with force of mind ſuperior to vulgar prejudices, and capable of contemplating man, under whatever aſpect he appears, with a candid and diſcerning eye.

from the incapacity of the firſt obſervers,

THE Spaniards, who firſt viſited America, and who had an opportunity of beholding its various tribes, while entire and unſubdued, were far from poſſeſſing the qualities requiſite for obſerving the ſtriking ſpectacle preſented to their view. Neither the age in which they lived, nor the nation to which they belonged, had made ſuch progreſs in true ſcience, as

inſpires

inſpires enlarged and liberal ſentiments. The conquerors of the New World were moſtly illiterate adventurers, deſtitute of all the ideas which ſhould have directed them in contemplating objects, ſo extremely different from thoſe with which they were acquainted. Surrounded continually with danger, or ſtruggling with hardſhips, they had little leiſure, and leſs capacity for any ſpeculative inquiry. Eager to take poſſeſſion of a country of ſuch vaſt extent and opulence, and happy in finding it occupied by inhabitants ſo incapable to defend it, they haſtily pronounced them to be a wretched order of men, formed merely for ſervitude; and were more employed in computing the profits of their labour, than inquiring into the operations of their minds, or the reaſons of their cuſtoms and inſtitutions. The perſons who penetrated at ſubſequent periods into the interior provinces, to which the knowledge and devaſtations of the firſt conquerors did not reach, were generally of a ſimilar character; brave and enterpriſing in an high degree, but ſo uninformed as to be little qualified either for obſerving or deſcribing what they beheld.

and their prejudices;

NOT only the incapacity, but the prejudices of the Spaniards, rendered their accounts of the people of America extremely defective. Soon after they planted colonies in their new conqueſts, a difference in opinion aroſe with reſpect to the treatment of the natives. One party, ſolicitous to render their ſervitude perpetual, repreſented them as a brutiſh, obſtinate race, incapable either of acquiring religious knowledge, or of being trained to the functions of ſocial life. The other, full of pious concern for their converſion, contended that, though rude and ignorant, they were gentle affectionate, docile, and by proper inſtructions and regulations might be formed gradually into

good

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good Chriſtians and uſeful citizens. This controverſy, as I have already related, was carried on with all the warmth which is natural, when attention to intereſt on the one hand, and religious zeal on the other, animated the diſputants. Moſt of the laity eſpouſed the former opinion; all the eccleſiaſtics were advocates for the latter; and we ſhall uniformly find that, accordingly as an author belonged to either of theſe parties, he is apt to magnify the virtues or aggravate the defects of the Americans beyond meaſure. Thoſe repugnant accounts increaſe the difficulty of attaining a perfect knowledge of their character, and render it neceſſary to peruſe all the deſcriptions of them by Spaniſh writers with diſtruſt, and to receive their information with ſome allowance.

and from the ſyſtems of philoſophers.

ALMOST two centuries elapſed after the diſcovery of America, before the manners of its inhabitants attracted, in any conſiderable degree, the attention of philoſophers. At length, they diſcovered that the knowledge of their condition and character might enable them to fill up a conſiderable chaſm in the hiſtory of the human ſpecies, and lead to ſpeculations no leſs curious than important. They entered upon this new field of ſtudy with great ardor; but, inſtead of throwing light upon the ſubject, they have contributed, in ſome degree, to involve it in additional obſcurity. Too impatient to inquire, they haſtened to decide; and began to erect ſyſtems, when they ſhould have been ſearching for facts on which to eſtabliſh their foundations. Struck with the appearance of degeneracy in the human ſpecies throughout the New World, and aſtoniſhed at beholding a vaſt continent occupied by a naked, feeble, and ignorant race of men, ſome authors of great name have maintained, that this part of the globe had but lately emerged from the ſea, and become fit for the

the reſidence of man; that every thing in it bore marks of recent original; and that its inhabitants, lately called into exiſtence, and ſtill at the beginning of their career, were unworthy to be compared with the people of a more ancient and improved continent*. Others have imagined, that, under the influence of an unkindly climate, which checks and enervates the principle of life, man never attained in America the perfection which belongs to his nature, but remained an animal of an inferior order, defective in the vigour of his bodily frame, and deſtitute of ſenſibility, as well as of force, in the operations of his mind †. In oppoſition to both theſe, other philoſophers have ſuppoſed that man arrives at his higheſt dignity and excellence long before he reaches a ſtate of refinement; and, in the rude ſimplicity of ſavage life, diſplays an elevation of ſentiment, an independence of mind, and a warmth of attachment, for which it is vain to ſearch among the members of poliſhed ſocieties ‡. They ſeem to conſider that as the moſt perfect ſtate of man which is the leaſt civilized. They deſcribe the manners of the rude Americans with ſuch rapture, as if they propoſed them for models to the reſt of the ſpecies. Theſe contradictory theories have been propoſed with equal confidence, and uncommon powers of genius and eloquence have been exerted in order to clothe them with an appearance of truth.

As all thoſe circumſtances concur in rendering an inquiry into the ſtate of the rude nations in America intricate and obſcure, it is neceſſary to carry it on with caution. When guided in our reſearches by the intelligent obſervations of the

* M. de Buffon Hiſt. Nat. iii. 484, &c. ix. 103. 114.
† M. de P. Recherches Philoſ. ſur les Americ. paſſim.
‡ M. Rouſſeau.

few

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few philoſophers who have viſited this part of the globe, we may venture to decide. When obliged to have recourſe to the ſuperficial remarks of vulgar travellers, of ſailors, traders, buccaneers, and miſſionaries, we muſt often pauſe, and comparing detached facts, endeavour to diſcover what they wanted ſagacity to obſerve. Without indulging conjecture, or betraying a propenſity to either ſyſtem, we muſt ſtudy with equal care to avoid the extremes of extravagant admiration, or of ſupercilious contempt for thoſe manners which we deſcribe.

Method obſerved in the inquiry.

In order to conduct this inquiry with greater accuracy, it ſhould be rendered as ſimple as poſſible. Man exiſted as an individual before he became the member of a community; and the qualities which belong to him under his former capacity ſhould be known, before we proceed to examime thoſe which ariſe from the latter relation. This is peculiarly neceſſary in inveſtigating the manners of rude nations. Their political union is ſo incomplete, their civil inſtitutions and regulations ſo few, ſo ſimple, and of ſuch ſmall authority, that they ought to be viewed rather as independent agents than as members of a regular ſociety. The character of a ſavage reſults almoſt entirely from his ſentiments or feelings as an individual, and is but little influenced by his imperfect ſubjection to government and order. I ſhall conduct my reſearches concerning the manners of the Americans in this natural order, proceeding gradually from what is ſimple to what is more complicated.

I shall conſider, I. The bodily conſtitution of the Americans in thoſe regions now under review. II. The qualities of their minds. III. Their domeſtic ſtate. IV. Their political ſtate and inſtitutions. V. Their ſyſtem of war, and public ſecurity.

ſecurity. VI. The arts with which they were acquainted. VII. Their religious ideas and inſtitutions. VIII. Such ſingular detached cuſtoms as are not reducible to any of the former heads. IX. I ſhall conclude with a general review and eſtimate of their virtues and defects.

The conſtitution of their bodies.

I. THE bodily conſtitution of the Americans.—The human body is leſs affected by climate than that of any other animal. Some animals are confined to a particular region of the globe, and cannot exiſt beyond it; others, tho' they may be brought to bear the injuries of a climate foreign to them, ceaſe to multiply when carried out of that diſtrict, which Nature deſtined to be their manſion. Even ſuch as ſeem capable of being naturalized in various climates, feel the effect of every remove from their proper ſtation, and gradually dwindle and degenerate from the vigour and perfection peculiar to their ſpecies. Man is the only living creature whoſe frame is at once ſo hardy and ſo flexible, that he can ſpread over the whole earth, become the inhabitant of every region, and thrive and multiply under every climate. Subject, however, to the general law of Nature, the human body is not intirely exempt from the operation of climate, and when expoſed to the extremes either of heat or cold, its ſize or vigour diminiſhes.

Complexion, &c.

THE firſt appearance of the inhabitants of the New World, filled the diſcoverers with ſuch aſtoniſhment, that they were apt to imagine them a race of men different from thoſe of the other hemiſphere. Their complexion is of a reddiſh brown, nearly reſembling the colour of copper *. The hair of their heads is always black, long, coarſe,

* Oviedo Somario, p. 46, D. Life of Columbus, c. 24.

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and lank. They have no beard, and every part of their body is perfectly ſmooth. Their perſons are of a full ſize, extremely ſtreight, and well proportioned *. Their features are regular, though often diſtorted by abſurd endeavours to improve the beauty of their natural form, or to render their aſpect more dreadful to their enemies. In the iſlands, where four-footed animals were both few and ſmall, and the earth yielded her productions almoſt ſpontaneouſly, the conſtitution of the natives, neither braced by the active exerciſes of the chace, nor invigorated by the labour of cultivation, was extremely feeble and languid. On the continent, where the foreſts abound with game of various kinds, and the chief occupation of many tribes was to purſue it, their frame acquired greater firmneſs. Still, however, the Americans were more remarkable for agility than ſtrength. They reſembled beaſts of prey, rather than animals formed for labour †. They were not only averſe to toil, but incapable of it; and when rouzed by force from their native indolence, and compelled to work, they ſunk under taſks which the people of the other continent would have performed with eaſe ‡. This feebleneſs of the conſtitution was univerſal among the inhabitants of thoſe regions in America which we are ſurveying, and may be conſidered as characteriſtic of the ſpecies there §.

More feeble

THE beardleſs countenance and ſmooth ſkin of the American ſeems to indicate a defect of vigour, occaſioned by ſome vice in his frame. He is deſtitute of one ſign of manhood and of ſtrength.

* See NOTE XLII. † See NOTE XLIII.

‡ Oviedo Som. p. 51, C. Voy. de Correal, ii. 138. Wafer's Deſcription, p. 131.

§ B. Las Caſs Brev. Relac. p. 4. Taurquem. Monar. i. 580. Oviedo Somario, p. 41. Hiſt. lib. iii. c. 6. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. ix. c. 5. Simon, p. 41.

THIS

This peculiarity, by which the inhabitants of the New World are diſtinguiſhed from the people of all other nations, cannot be attributed, as ſome travellers have ſuppoſed, to their mode of ſubſiſtence. For though the food of many Americans be ſo extremely inſipid, that they are altogether unacquainted with the uſe of ſalt, rude tribes in other parts of the earth have ſubſiſted on aliments equally ſimple without this mark of degradation, or any apparent ſymptom of a diminution in their vigour.

Leſs appetite.

As the external form of the Americans leads us to ſuſpect that there is ſome natural debility in their frame, the ſmallneſs of their appetite for food has been mentioned by many authors as a confirmation of this ſuſpicion. The quantity of food which men conſume varies according to the temperature of the climate in which they live, the degree of activity which they exert, and the natural vigour of their conſtitutions. Under the enervating heat of the torrid zone, and when men paſs their days in indolence and eaſe, they require leſs nouriſhment than the active inhabitants of temperate or cold countries. But neither the warmth of their climate, nor their extreme lazineſs, will account for the uncommon defect of appetite among the Americans. The Spaniards were aſtoniſhed upon obſerving this, not only in the iſlands, but in ſeveral parts of the continent. The conſtitutional temperance of the natives far exceeded, in their opinion, the abſtinence of the moſt mortified hermits †; while, on the other hand, the appetite of the Spaniards appeared to the Americans inſatiably voracious; and they affirmed, that one Spaniard

* Charlev. Hiſt. de Nouv. Fr. iii. 310.

† Ramuſio, iii. 304, F. 306, A. Simon Conquiſta, &c. p. 29. Hakluyt, iii. 468. 508.

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devoured more food in a day than was ſufficient for ten Americans *.

Leſs vehemence of deſire.

A proof of ſome feebleneſs in their frame ſtill more ſtriking, is the inſenſibility of the Americans to the charms of beauty, and the power of love. That paſſion which was deſtined to perpetuate life, to be the bond of ſocial union, and the ſource of tenderneſs and joy, is the moſt ardent in the human breaſt; and though the perils and hardſhips of the ſavage ſtate, though exceſſive fatigue, on ſome occaſions, and the difficulty at all times of procuring ſubſiſtence, may ſeem to be adverſe to this paſſion, and to have a tendency to abate its vigour, yet the rudeſt nations in every other part of the globe ſeem to feel its influence more powerfully than the inhabitants of the New World. The negro glows with all the warmth of deſire natural to his climate; and the moſt uncultivated Aſiatics diſcover that ſenſibility, which, from their ſituation, we ſhould expect them to have felt. But the Americans are in an amazing degree, ſtrangers to the force of this firſt inſtinct of nature. In every part of the New World the natives treat their women with coldneſs and indifference. They are neither the objects of that tender attachment which takes place in civilized ſociety, nor of that ardent deſire conſpicuous among rude nations. Even in climates where this paſſion uſually acquires its greateſt vigour, the ſavage of America views his female with diſdain, as an animal of a leſs noble ſpecies. He is at no pains to win her favour by the aſſiduity of courtſhip, and ſtill leſs ſolicitous to preſerve it by indulgence † and gentle-

* Herrera, dec. i. lib. ii. c. 16.

† Hennepin Mœurs de Sauvages, 32, &c. Rochfort Hiſt. des Iſles Antilles, p. 461. Voyage de Coreal, ii. 141. Ramuſio, iii. 309. F. Lozano Deſcr. del. Gran Chaco, 71. Falkner's Deſcr. of Patagon, p. 125. Lettere di P. Cataneo ap. Muratori I. 3. Chriſtian. Felice, i. 305.

neſs.

neſs. Miſſionaries themſelves, notwithſtanding the auſterity of monaſtic ideas, cannot refrain from expreſſing their aſtoniſhment at the diſpaſſionate coldneſs of the American young men in their intercourſe with the other ſex *. Nor is this reſerve to be aſcribed to any opinion which they entertain with reſpect to the merit of female chaſtity. That is an idea too refined for a ſavage, and ſuggeſted by a delicacy of ſentiment and affection to which he is a ſtranger.

Reflections with reſpect to theſe.

But in inquiries concerning either the bodily or mental qualities of particular races of men, there is not a more common or more ſeducing error, than that of aſcribing to a ſingle cauſe, thoſe characteriſtic peculiarities, which are the effect of the combined operation of many cauſes. The climate and ſoil of America differ, in ſo many reſpects, from thoſe of the other hemiſphere, and this difference is ſo obvious and ſtriking, that philoſophers of great eminence have laid hold on this as ſufficient to account for what is peculiar in the conſtitution of its inhabitants. They reſt on phyſical cauſes alone, and conſider the feeble frame and languid deſire of the Americans, as conſequences of the temperament of that portion of the globe which they inhabit. But the influences of political and moral cauſes ought not to have been overlooked. Theſe operate with no leſs effect than that on which they reſt as a full explanation of the ſingular appearances which have been mentioned. Wherever the ſtate of ſociety is ſuch as to create many wants and deſires, which cannot be ſatisfied without regular exertions of induſtry, the body accuſtomed to labour becomes

* Chanvalon. p. 51. Lettr. Edif. tom. xxiv. 318. Tertre, ii. 377. Venegaſ. i. 81. Ribas Hiſt. de los Triumf. p. 11.

robuſt

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robuſt and patient of fatigue. In a more ſimple ſtate, where the demands of men are ſo few and ſo moderate, that they may be gratified, almoſt without any effort, by the ſpontaneous productions of nature, the powers of the body are not called forth, nor can they attain their proper ſtrength. The natives of Chili and of north-America, the two temperate regions in the New World, who live by hunting, may be deemed an active and vigorous race, when compared witth the inhabitants of the iſles, or of thoſe parts of the continent where hardly any labour is requiſite to procure ſubſiſtence. The exertions of a hunter are not, however, ſo regular, or ſo continued, as thoſe of perſons employed in the culture of the earth, or in the various arts of civilized life, and though his agility may be greater than theirs, his ſtrength is on the whole inferior. If another direction were given to the active powers of man in the New World, and his force augmented by exerciſe, he might acquire a degree of vigour which he does not in his preſent ſtate poſſeſs. The truth of this is confirmed by experience. Wherever the Americans have been gradually accuſtomed to hard labour, their conſtitutions become robuſt, and they have been found capable of performing ſuch taſks, as ſeemed not only to exceed the powers of ſuch a feeble frame as has been deemed peculiar to their country, but to equal any effort of the natives, either of Africa or of Europe *.

THE ſame reaſoning will apply to what has been obſerved concerning their ſlender demand for food. As a proof that this ſhould be aſcribed, as much to their extreme indolence, and often total want of occupation, as to any thing peculiar

* See NOTE XLIV.

in

in the phyſical ſtructure of their bodies, it has been obſerved, that in thoſe diſtricts, where the people of America are obliged to exert any unuſual effort of activity, in order to procure ſubſiſtence, or wherever they are employed in ſevere labour, their appetite is not inferior to that of other men, and, in ſome places, it has ſtruck obſervers as remarkably voracious *.

THE operation of political and moral cauſes is ſtill more conſpicuous, in modifying the degree of attachment between the ſexes. In a ſtate of high civilization, this paſſion inflamed by reſtraint, refined by delicacy, and cheriſhed by faſhion, occupies and engroſſes the heart. It is no longer a ſimple inſtinct of nature; ſentiment heightens the ardour of deſire, and the moſt tender emotions of which our frame is ſuſceptible, ſoothe and agitate the ſoul. This deſcription, however, applies only to thoſe, who, by their ſituation, are exempted from the cares and labours of life. Among perſons of inferior order, who are doomed by their condition to inceſſant toil, the dominion of this paſſion is leſs violent, and their ſolicitude to procure ſubſiſtence, and to provide for the firſt demand of nature, leaves little leiſure for attending to its ſecond call. But if the nature of the intercourſe between the ſexes varies ſo much in perſons of different rank in poliſhed ſocieties, the condition of man, while he remains uncivilized, muſt occaſion a variation ſtill more apparent. We may well ſuppoſe, that amidſt the hardſhips, the dangers, and the ſimplicity of ſavage life, where ſubſiſtence is always precarious, and often ſcanty, where men are almoſt continually engaged in the purſuit of their enemies, or in guarding againſt their attacks, and where neither dreſs nor reſerve are employed as arts of female allurement, that

* Gumilla, ii. 12. 70. 237. Laſitau, i. 515. Ovalle Church, iii. 81. Muratori, i. 295.

the

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the attention of the Americans to their women would be extremely feeble, without imputing this ſolely to any phyſical defect or degradation in their frame.

IT is accordingly obſerved, that in thoſe countries of America, where, from the fertility of the ſoil, the mildneſs of the climate, or ſome farther advances which the natives have made in improvement, the means of ſubſiſtence are more abundant, and the hardſhips of ſavage life, are leſs ſeverely felt, the animal paſſion of the ſexes becomes more ardent. Striking examples of this occur among ſome tribes ſeated on the banks of great rivers well ſtored with food, among others who are maſters of hunting-grounds abounding ſo much with game, that they have a regular and plentiful ſupply of nouriſhment with little labour. The ſuperior degree of ſecurity and affluence which they enjoy, is followed by their natural effects. The paſſions implanted in the human frame by the hand of nature acquired additional force; new taſtes and deſires are formed; the women, as they are more valued and admired, become more attentive to dreſs and ornament; the men, beginning to feel how much of their own happineſs depends upon them, no longer diſdain the arts of winning their favour and affection. The intercourſe of the ſexes becomes very different from that which takes place among their ruder countrymen; and as hardly any reſtraint is impoſed on the gratification of deſire, either by religion, or laws, or decency, the diſſolution of their manners is exceſſive *.

None of them deformed.

NOTWITHSTANDING the feeble make of the Americans, almoſt none of them are deformed, or mutilated, or defective in any of their ſenſes. All travellers have been ſtruck with this circum-

* Biet. 389. Charlev. iii. 423. Dumont Mem. ſur Louiſiane, i. 155.

ſtance,

ſtance, and have celebrated the uniform ſymmetry and perfection of their external figure. Some authors ſearch for the cauſe of this appearance in their phyſical condition. As the parents are not exhauſted or over-fatigued with hard labour, they ſuppoſe that their children are born vigorous and ſound. They imagine, that in the liberty of ſavage life, the human body, naked and unconfined from its earlieſt age, preſerves its natural form; and that all its limbs and members acquire a juſter proportion, than when fettered with artificial reſtraints, which ſtint its growth, and diſtort its ſhape *. Something, without doubt, may be aſcribed to the operation of theſe cauſes; but the true reaſons of this apparent advantage, which is common to all ſavage nations, lie deeper, and are cloſely interwoven with the nature and genius of that ſtate. The infancy of man is ſo long and ſo helpleſs, that it is extremely difficult to rear children among rude nations. Their means of ſubſiſtence are not only ſcancy, but precarious. Such as live by hunting muſt range over extenſive countries, and ſhift often from place to place. The care of children, as well as every other laborious taſk, is devolved upon the women. The diſtreſſes and hardſhips of the ſavage life, which are often ſuch as can hardly be ſupported by perſons in full vigour, muſt be fatal to thoſe of more tender age. Afraid of undertaking a taſk ſo laborious, and of ſuch long duration, the women in ſome parts of America, extinguiſh the firſt ſparks of that life which they are unable to cheriſh, and by the uſe of certain herbs procure frequent abortions †. Senſible that only ſtout and well-formed children have force of conſtitution to ſtruggle through ſuch an hard

* Piſo. p. 6. † Ellis's Voyage to Hudſon's Bay, 198. Herrera, dec. 7. lib. ix. c. 4.

infancy,

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infancy, other nations abandon or deſtroy ſuch of their progeny as appear feeble or defective, as unworthy of attention *. Even when they endeavour to rear all their children without diſtinction, ſo great a proportion of the whole number periſhes under the rigorous treatment which muſt be their lot in the ſavage ſtate, that few of thoſe who laboured under any original frailty attain the age of manhood †. Thus, in poliſhed ſocieties, where the means of ſubſiſtence are ſecured with certainty, and acquired with eaſe; where the talents of the mind are often of more importance than the powers of the body; children are preſerved notwithſtanding their defects or deformity, and grow up to be uſeful citizens. In rude nations, ſuch perſons are either cut off as ſoon as they are born, or becoming a burden to themſelves and to the community, cannot long protract their lives. But in thoſe provinces of the New World where, by the eſtabliſhment of the Europeans, more regular proviſion has been made for the ſubſiſtence of the inhabitants, and they are reſtrained from laying violent hands on their children, the Americans are ſo far from being eminent for any ſuperior perfection in their form, that one ſhould rather ſuſpect ſome peculiar imbecillity in the race, from the extraordinary number of individuals who are deformed, dwarfiſh, mutilated, blind, or deaf ‡.

Uniformity of their appearance.

HOWEVER feeble the conſtitution of the Americans may be, it is remarkable, that there is leſs variety in the human form throughout the New World, than in the antient continent. When Columbus and the other diſcoverers firſt viſited the dif-

* Gumilla Hiſt. ii. 234. Techo's Hiſt. of Paraguay, &c. Churchill's Collect. vi. 108.

† Creuxii Hiſt. Canad. p. 57.

‡ Voyage de Ulloa, i. 232.

ferent

ferent countries of America which lie within the torrid zone, they naturally expected to find people of the ſame complexion with thoſe in the correſponding regions of the other hemiſphere. To their amazement, however, they diſcovered that America contained no negroes * ; and the cauſe of this ſingular appearance became as much the object of curioſity, as the fact itſelf was of wonder. In what part or membrane of the body that humour reſides which tinges the complexion of the negroe with a deep black, it is the buſineſs of anatomiſts to inquire and deſcribe. The powerful operation of heat appears manifeſtly to be the cauſe which produces this ſtriking variety in the human ſpecies. All Europe, almoſt the whole of Aſia, and the temperate parts of Africa, are occupied by men of a fair complexion. All the torrid zone in Africa, ſome of the warmer regions adjacent to it, and a few countries in Aſia are filled with people of a deep black colour. If we trace the nations of our continent, making our progreſs from cold and temperate countries towards thoſe parts which are expoſed to the influence of vehement and unremitting heat, we ſhall find, that the extreme whiteneſs of their ſkin ſoon begins to diminiſh ; that its colour deepens gradually as we advance ; and after paſſing through all the ſucceſſive gradations of ſhade terminates in an uniform unvarying black. But in America, where the agency of heat is checked and abated by various cauſes, which I have already explained, the climate ſeems to be deſtitute of that force which produces ſuch wonderful effects on the human frame. The colour of the natives of the torrid zone, in America, can hardly be ſaid to be of a deeper hue than that of the people in the more temperate parts of their continent. Accurate obſervers, who had an opportunity of viewing the Americans in very differ-

* P. Martyr. dec. p. 71.

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ent climates, and in countries far removed from each other, have been ſtruck with the amazing ſimilarity of their figure and aſpect *.

But though the hand of Nature has deviated ſo little from one ſtandard in faſhioning the human form in America, the creation of fancy hath been various and extravagant. The ſame fables that were current in the ancient continent, have been revived with reſpect to the New World, and America too has been peopled with human beings of monſtrous and fantaſtic appearance. The inhabitants of certain provinces were deſcribed to be pigmies of three feet high; thoſe of others to be giants of an enormous ſize. Some travellers publiſhed accounts of a people with only one eye, others pretended to have diſcovered men without heads, whoſe eyes and mouths were planted in their breaſts. The variety of Nature in her productions is, indeed, ſo great, that it is preſumptuous to ſet bounds to her fertility, and to reject indiſcriminately every relation that is not perfectly conſonant to our own limited obſervation and experience. But the other extreme, of yielding an haſty aſſent, on the ſlighteſt evidence, to whatever has the appearance of being ſtrange and marvellous, is no leſs unbecoming a philoſophical inquirer, as, in every period, men are more apt to be betrayed into error, by their weakneſs in believing too much, than by their arrogance in believing too little. In proportion as ſcience extends, and nature is examined with a diſcerning eye, the wonders that amuſed ages of ignorance diſappear. The tales of credulous travellers concerning America are forgotten; the monſters which they deſcribe have been ſearched for in vain; and thoſe provin-

* See NOTE XLV.

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ces where they pretend to have found inhabitants of ſingular forms, are now known to be poſſeſſed by people no wiſe different from the other Americans *. BOOK IV.

THOUGH theſe relations may, without diſcuſſion be rejected as fabulous, there are other accounts of ſuch varieties in the human ſpecies in ſome parts of the New World, which reſt upon better evidence, and merit more attentive examination. This variety has been particularly obſerved in three different diſtricts. The firſt of theſe is ſituated in the iſthmus of Darien, near the centre of America. Lionel Wafer, a traveller poſſeſſed of more curioſity and intelligence than we ſhould have expected to find in an aſſociate of Buccaneers, diſcovered there a ſmall but ſingular race of men. They are of low ſtature, according to his deſcription, of a feeble make, incapable of enduring fatigute. Their colour is a dead milk white; not reſembling that of fair people among Europeans, but without any tincture of a bluſh or ſanguine complexion. Their ſkin is covered with a fine hairy down of a chalky white, the hair of their heads, their eye-brows, and eye-laſhes, are of the ſame hue. Their eyes are of a ſingular form, and ſo weak, that they can hardly bear the light of the ſun; but they ſee clearly by moon-light, and are moſt active and gay in the night †. No race ſimilar to this has been diſcovered in any other part of America. Cortes, indeed, found ſome perſons exactly reſembling the white people of Darien, among the rare and monſtrous animals which Montezuma had collected ‡. But as the power of the Mexican empire extended to the provinces bordering on the iſthmus of Darien, they were pro-

* See NOTE XLVI.

† Wafer Deſcript. of Iſth. ap. Dampier, iii. p. 346.

‡ Cortes ap. Ramuſ. iii. p. 241. E.

bably

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bably brought from thence. Singular as the appearance of thoſe people may be, they cannot be conſidered as conſtituting a diſtinct ſpecies. Among the negroes of Africa, as well as the natives of the Indian iſlands, nature ſometimes produces a ſmall number of individuals, with all the characteriſtic features and qualities of white people of Darien. The former are called *Albinos* by the Portugueſe, the latter *Kackerlakes* by the Dutch. In Darien the parents of thoſe *Whites* are of the ſame colour with the other natives of the country; and this obſervation applies equally to the anomalous progeny of the negroes and Indians. The ſame mother who produces ſome children of a colour that does not belong to the race, brings forth the reſt of the complexion peculiar to her country *. One concluſion may then be formed with reſpect to the people deſcribed by Wafer, the *Albinos* and the *Kackerlakes*; they are a degenerated breed, not a ſeparate claſs of men; and from ſome diſeaſe or defect of their parents, the peculiar colour and debility which mark their degradation is tranſmitted to them. As a deciſive proof of this, it has been obſerved, that neither the white people of Darien, nor the Albinos of Africa, propagate their race: their children are of the colour and temperament peculiar to the natives of their reſpective countries †.

THE ſecond diſtrict that is occupied by inhabitants differing in appearance from the other people of America, is ſituated in a high northern latitude, extending from the coaſt of Labrador towards the pole, as far as the country is habitable. The people ſcattered over thoſe dreary regions, are known to the Europeans by the name of *Eſquimaux*. They themſelves, with that idea of their own ſuperiority,

* Margrav. Hiſt. Rer Nat. Braſ. lib. viii. c. 4.

† Wafer, p. 348. Demanet. Hiſt. de l'Afrique, ii. 234. Recherch. Philoſ. ſur les Amer. ii. 1. &c.

which

which conſoles the rudeſt and moſt wretched nations, aſſume the name of *Keralit* or *Men*. They are of a middle ſize and robuſt, with heads of a diſproportioned bulk, and feet as remarkably ſmall. Their complexion, though ſwarthy, by being continually expoſed to the rigour of a cold climate, inclines to the European white, rather than to the copper colour of America, and the men have beards which are ſometimes buſhy and long *. From theſe marks of diſtinction, as well as from one ſtill leſs equivocal, the affinity of their language to that of the Greenlanders, which I have already mentioned, we may conclude, with ſome degree of confidence, that the Eſquimaux are a race different from the reſt of the Americans.

We cannot decide with equal certainty concerning the inhabitants of the third diſtrict, ſituated at the ſouthern extremity of America. Theſe are the famous *Patagonians*, who, during two centuries and a half, have afforded a ſubject of controverſy to the learned, and an object of wonder to the vulgar. They are ſuppoſed to be one of the wandering tribes, which occupy the vaſt, but leaſt known region of America, which extends from the river De la Plata to the Straits of Magellan. Their proper ſtation is in that part of the interior country, which lies on the banks of the river Negro; but in the hunting ſeaſon they often roam as far as the ſtraits which ſeparate Terra del Fuego from the main-land. The firſt accounts of this people were brought to Europe by the companions of Magellan †, who deſcribed them as a gigantic race above eight feet high, and of ſtrength in pro-

* Ellis Voy. to Hudſ. Bay, p. 131, 139. De la Potherie, tom. i. p. 79. Wales Journ. of a Voy. to Churchill River. Phil. Tranſ. vol. lx. 109.

† Falkner's Deſcription of Patagonia, p. 102.

portion

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portion to their enormous size. Among several tribes of Animals, a disparity in bulk, as considerable, may be observed. Some large breeds of horses and dogs exceed the more diminutive races in stature and strength as far as the Patagonian is supposed to rise above the usual standard of the human body. But animals attain the highest perfection of their species, only in mild climates, or where they find the most nutritive food in greatest abundance. It is not then in the uncultivated waste of the Magellanic regions, and among a tribe of unprovident savages, that we should expect to find man, possessing the highest honours of his race, and distinguished by a superiority of size and vigour, far beyond what he has reached in any other part of the earth. The most explicit and unexceptionable evidence is requisite, in order to establish a fact, repugnant to those general principles and laws, which seem to effect the human frame in every other instance, and to decide with respect to its nature and qualities. Such evidence has not hitherto been produced. Though several persons, to whose testimony great respect is due, have visited this part of America, since the time of Magellan, and have had interviews with the natives; though some have affirmed, that such as they saw were of gigantic stature, and others have formed the same conclusion from measuring their footsteps, or the skeletons of their dead; yet their accounts vary from each other in so many essential points, and are mingled with so many circumstances manifestly false or fabulous, as detract much from their credit. On the other hand, some navigators, and those among the most eminent of their order for discernment and accuracy, have asserted that the natives of Patagonia, with whom they had intercourse, though stout

* See NOTE XLVII.

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and well made, are not of ſuch extraordinary ſize as to be diſtinguiſhed from the reſt of the human ſpecies. The exiſtence of this gigantic race of men, ſeems, then, to be one of thoſe points in natural hiſtory, with reſpect to which a cautious inquirer will heſitate, and will chuſe to ſuſpend his aſſent until more complete evidence ſhall decide, whether he ought to admit a fact, ſeemingly inconſiſtent with what reaſon and experience have diſcovered concerning the ſtructure and condition of man, in all the various ſituations in which he has been obſerved.

Their ſtate of health.

In order to form a complete idea with reſpect to the conſtitution of the inhabitants of this and the other hemiſphere, we ſhould attend not only to the make and vigour of their bodies, but conſider what degree of health they enjoy, and to what period of longevity they uſually arrive. In the ſimplicity of the ſavage ſtate, when man is not oppreſſed with labour, or enervated by luxury, or diſquieted with care, we are apt to imagine that his life will flow on almoſt untroubled by diſeaſe or ſuffering, until his days be terminated in extreme old age, by the gradual decays of nature. We find, accordingly, among the Americans, as well as among other rude people, perſons, whoſe decrepit and ſhrivelled form ſeems to indicate an extraordinary length of life. But as moſt of them are unacquainted with the art of numbering, and all of them as forgetful of what is paſt, as they are improvident for what is to come, it is impoſſible to aſcertain their age with any degree of preciſion*. It is evident, that the period of their longevity muſt vary conſiderably, according to the diverſity of climates, and their different

* Ulloa, Notic. Americ. 323. Bancroft Nat. Hiſt. of Guiana, 334.

BOOK IV. modes of ſubſiſtence. They ſeem, however, to be every where exempt from many of the diſtempers which afflict poliſhed nations. None of the maladies, which are the immediate offspring of luxury or ſloth, ever viſited them; and they have no names in their languages by which to diſtinguiſh this numerous train of adventitious evils.

Diſeaſes. BUT, whatever be the ſituation in which man is placed, he is born to ſuffer; and his diſeaſes, in the ſavage ſtate, though fewer in number, are, like thoſe of the animals whom he nearly reſembles in his mode of life, more violent, and more fatal. If luxury engenders and nouriſhes diſtempers of one ſpecious, the rigour and diſtreſſes of ſavage life bring on thoſe of another. As men, in this ſtate, are wonderfully improvident, and their means of ſubſiſtence precarious, they often paſs from extreme want to exuberant plenty, according to the viciſſitudes of fortune in the chace, or to the variety in the productions of the ſeaſons. Their inconſiderate gluttony in the one ſituation, and their ſevere abſtinence in the other, are equally pernicious. For, though the human conſtitution may be accuſtomed by habit, like that of animals of prey, to tolerate long famine, and then to gorge voraciouſly, it is not a little affected by ſuch ſudden and violent tranſitions. The ſtrength and vigour of ſavages are, at ſome ſeaſons, impaired by what they ſuffer from ſcarcity of food: at others, they are afflicted with diſorders ariſing from indigeſtion and ſuperfluity of groſs aliment. Theſe laſt are ſo common, that they may be conſidered as the unavoidable conſequence of their mode of ſubſiſting, and cut off conſiderable numbers in the prime of life. They are likewiſe extremely ſubject to conſumptions, to pleuretic,

pleuretic, aſthmatic, and paralytic diſorders*, brought on by the immoderate hardſhips and fatigue which they endure in hunting and in war; or owing to the inclemency of the ſeaſons to which they are continually expoſed. In the ſavage ſtate, hardſhips and fatigue violently aſſault the conſtitution. In poliſhed ſocieties, intemperance undermines it. It is not eaſy to determine which of them operates with moſt fatal effect, or tends moſt to abridge human life. The influence of the former is certainly moſt extenſive. The pernicious conſequences of luxury reach only a few members in any community, the diſtreſſes of ſavage life are felt by all. As far as I can judge, after very minute inquiry, the general period of human life is ſhorter among ſavages, than in well-regulated and induſtrious ſocieties.

One dreadful malady, the ſevereſt ſcourge, with which, in this life, offended Heaven chaſtens the indulgence of criminal deſire, ſeems to have been peculiar to the Americans. By communicating it to their conquerors, they have not only amply avenged their own wrongs, but by adding this calamity to thoſe which formerly embittered human life, they have, perhaps, more than counterbalanced all the benefits which Europe has derived from the diſcovery of the New World. This diſtemper, from the country in which it firſt raged, or from the people by whom it was ſuppoſed to have been ſpread over Europe, has been ſometimes called the Neapolitan, and ſometimes the French Diſeaſe. At its firſt appearance, the infection was ſo ma-

* Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 364. Lafitau, ii. 360. De la Potherie, ii. 37.

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lignant, its ſymptoms ſo violent, its operation ſo rapid and fatal, as to baffle all the efforts of medical ſkill. Aſtoniſhment and terror accompanied this unknown affliction in its progreſs, and men began to dread the extinction of the human race by ſuch a cruel viſitation. Experience, and the ingenuity of phyſicians gradually diſcovered remedies of ſuch virtue as to cure or mitigate the evil. During the courſe of two centuries and a half, its virulence ſeems to have abated conſiderably. At length, in the ſame manner with the leproſy, which raged in Europe for ſome centuries, it may waſte its force and diſappear; and in ſome happier age, this weſtern infection, like that from the Eaſt, may be known only by deſcription *.

Power and qualities of their minds.

II. After conſidering what appears to be peculiar in the bodily conſtitution of the Americans, our attention is naturally turned towards the powers and qualities of their minds. As the individual advances from the ignorance and imbecillity of the infant ſtate, to vigour and maturity of underſtanding, ſomething ſimilar to this may be obſerved in the progreſs of the ſpecies. With reſpect to it, too, there is a period of infancy, during which ſeveral powers of the mind are not unfolded, and all are feeble and defective in their operation. In the early ages of ſociety, while the condition of man is ſimple and rude, his reaſon is but little exerciſed, and his deſires move within a very narrow ſphere. Hence ariſe two remarkable characteriſtics of the human mind, in this ſtate. Its intellectual powers are extremely limited; its emotions and efforts are few and languid. Both theſe diſtinctions are con-

* See NOTE XLVIII.

ſpicuous

ſpicuous among the rudeſt and moſt unimproved of the American tribes, and conſtitute a ſtriking part in their deſcription. BOOK IV.

Intellectual faculties very limited.

WHAT, among poliſhed nations, is called ſpeculative reaſoning or reſearch, is altogether unknown in the rude ſtate of ſociety, and never becomes the occupation or amuſement of the human faculties, until man be ſo far improved as to have ſecured, with certainty, the means of ſubſiſtence, as well as the poſſeſſion of leiſure and tranquillity. The thoughts and attention of a ſavage are confined within the ſmall circle of objects, immediately conducive to his preſervation or enjoyment. Every thing beyond that, eſcapes his obſervation, or is perfectly indifferent to him. Like a mere animal, what is before his eyes intereſts and affects him; what is out of ſight, or at a diſtance, makes no impreſſion *. There are ſeveral people in America whoſe limited underſtandings ſeem not to be capable of forming an arrangement for futurity; neither their ſolicitude nor their foreſight extend ſo far. They follow blindly the impulſe of the appetite which they feel, but are entirely regardleſs of diſtant conſequences, and even of thoſe removed in the leaſt degree from immediate apprehenſion. While they highly prize ſuch things as ſerve preſent uſe, or miniſter to preſent enjoyment, they ſet no value upon thoſe which are not the object of ſome immediate want †. When, on the approach of the evening, a Caribbee feels himſelf diſpoſed to go to reſt, no conſideration will tempt him to ſell his hammoc. But, in the morning, when he is ſallying out to the buſineſs or paſtime of the day,

* Ulloa Noticias Americ. 222. † Venegas Hiſt. of Calif. i. 66. Sepp. Church Coll. v. 693. Borde Deſcr. des Caraibes, p. 16. Ellis Voy. 194.

he

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he will part with it for the ſlighteſt toy that catches his fancy *. At the cloſe of winter, while the impreſſion of what he has ſuffered from the rigour of the climate is freſh in the mind of the North American, he ſets himſelf with vigour to prepare materials for erecting a comfortable hut to protect him againſt the inclemency of the ſucceeding ſeaſon; but as ſoon as the weather becomes mild, he forgets what is paſt, abandons his work, and never thinks of it more, until the return of cold compels him, when too late, to reſume it †.

If in concerns the moſt intereſting, and ſeemingly the moſt ſimple, the reaſon of man, while rude and deſtitute of culture, differs ſo little from the thoughtleſs levity of children, or the improvident inſtinct of animals, its exertions in other directions cannot be very conſiderable. The objects towards which reaſon turns, and the diſquiſitions in which it engages, muſt depend upon the ſtate in which man is placed, and are ſuggeſted by his neceſſities and deſires. Diſquiſitions, which appear the moſt neceſſary and important to men in one ſtate of ſociety, never occur to thoſe in another. Among civilized nations, arithmetic or the art of numbering, is deemed an eſſential and elementary ſcience, and in our continent, the invention and uſe of it reaches back to a period ſo remote as is beyond the knowledge of hiſtory. But among ſavages, who have no property to eſtimate, no hoarded treaſures to count, no variety of objects or multiplicity of ideas to enumerate, arithmetic is a ſuperfluous and uſeleſs art. Accordingly, among ſome tribes in America, it ſeems to be quite unknown. There are many who cannot reckon

* Labat. Voyages, ii. 114, 115. Tertre, ii. 385.
† Adair Hiſt. of Amer. Indians, 417.

farther

farther than three; and have no denomination to distinguiſh any number above it *. Several can proceed as far as ten, others to twenty. When they would convey an idea of any number beyond theſe, they point to the hair of their head, intimating that it is equal to them, or with wonder declare it to be ſo great that it cannot be reckoned †. Not only the Americans, but all nations, while extremely rude, ſeem to be unacquainted with the art of computation ‡. As ſoon, however, as they acquire ſuch acquaintance or connection with a variety of objects, that there is frequent occaſion to combine or divide them, their knowledge of numbers increaſes, ſo that the ſtate of this art among any people may be conſidered as one ſtandard, by which to eſtimate the degree of their improvement. The Iroquois, in North America, as they are much more civilized than the rude inhabitants of Braſil, Paraguay, or Guiana, have likewiſe made greater advances in this reſpect; though even their arithmetic does not extend beyond a thouſand, as in their petty tranſactions they have no occaſion for any higher number §. The Cherokee, a leſs conſiderable nation on the ſame continent, can reckon only as far as a hundred, and to that extent have names for the ſeveral numbers; the ſmaller tribes in their neighbourhood can riſe no higher than ten ‖.

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In other reſpects, the exerciſe of the underſtanding among rude nations is ſtill more limited. The firſt ideas of every human being muſt be ſuch as

No abſtract ideas.

* Condam. p. 67. Stadius up. de Bry, ix. 128. Lery. ibid 251. Biet. 362. Lettr. Edif. 23. 214. † Dumont Louiſ. i. 187. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. iii. c. 3. Biet. 396. Borde 6. ‡ This is the caſe with the Greenlanders, Crantz. i. 225. and with the Kamchatkadales, M. l'Abbé Chappe, iii. 17. § Charlev. Nouv. France, iii. 402. ‖ Adair Hiſt. of Amer. Indians, 77. See NOTE XLIX.

he

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he receives by the ſenſes. But, in the mind of man, while in the ſavage ſtate, there ſeem to be hardly any ideas but what enter by this avenue. The objects around him are preſented to his eye. Such as may be ſubſervient to his uſe, or can gratify any of his appetites, attract his notice; he views the reſt without curioſity or attention. Satisfied with conſidering them under that ſimple mode, in which they appear to him, as ſeparate and detached, he neither combines them ſo as to form general claſſes, nor contemplates their qualities apart, nor beſtows a thought upon the operations of his own mind concerning them. Thus, he is unacquainted with all the ideas which have been denominated *univerſal*, *abſtract*, or *of reflection*. The range of his underſtanding muſt, of courſe, be very confined, and his reaſoning powers be employed merely on what is ſenſible. This is ſo remarkably the caſe with the ruder nations of America, that their languages, (as we ſhall afterwards find) have not a word to expreſs any thing but what is material or corporeal. *Time*, *ſpace*, *ſubſtance*, and a thouſand other terms which repreſent abſtract and univerſal ideas, are altogether unknown to them *. A naked ſavage, cowering near the fire in his miſerable cabbin, or ſtretched under a few branches which afford him a temporary ſhelter, has as little inclination as capacity for uſeleſs ſpeculation. His thoughts extend not beyond what relates to animal life; and when they are not directed towards ſome of its concerns, his mind is totally inactive. In ſituations where no extraordinary effort, either of ingenuity or labour is requiſite, in order to ſatisfy the ſimple demands of nature, the powers of the mind are ſo ſeldom rouſed to any exertion, that the rational faculties continue almoſt dormant and

* Condam. p. 54.

unex-

unexerciſed. The numerous tribes ſcattered over the rich plains of South-America, the inhabitants of ſome of the iſlands, and of ſeveral fertile plains on the continent, come under this deſcription. Their vacant countenance, their ſtaring unexpreſſive eye, their lifeleſs inattention, and total ignorance of ſubjects, which ſeem to be the firſt which ſhould occupy the thoughts of rational beings, made ſuch impreſſion upon the Spaniards, when they firſt beheld thoſe rude people, that they conſidered them as animals of an inferior order, and could not believe that they belonged to the human ſpecies *. It required the authority of a papal bull to counteract this opinion, and to convince them that the Americans were capable of the functions, and intitled to the privileges of humanity †. Since that time, perſons more enlightened and impartial than the diſcoverers or conquerors of America, have had an opportunity of contemplating the moſt ſavage of its inhabitants, and they have been aſtoniſhed and humbled, with obſerving how nearly man, in this condition, approaches to the brute creation. But in ſeverer climates, where ſubſiſtence cannot be procured with the ſame eaſe, where men muſt unite more cloſely, and act with greater concert, neceſſity calls forth their talents, and ſharpens their invention, ſo that the intelligent powers are more exerciſed and improved. The North-Americans and natives of Chili, who inhabit the temperate regions in the two great diſtricts of America, are people of cultivated and inlarged underſtandings, when viewed in compariſon with ſome of thoſe ſeated in the iſlands, or on the banks of the Maragnon and Orinoco. Their occupations are more various, their ſyſtem of policy, as well as of war, more complex, their arts more numerous.

* Herrera, dec. 2. lib. ii. c. 15.

† Torquem. Mon. Ind. iii. 198.

But,

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But, even among them, the intellectual powers are extremely limited in their operations, and unleſs when turned directly to thoſe objects which intereſt a ſavage, are held in no eſtimation. Both the North-Americans and Chileſe, when not engaged in ſome of the functions belonging to a warrior or hunter, loiter away their time in thoughtleſs indolence, unacquainted with any other ſubject worthy of their attention, or capable of occupying their minds *. If even among them, reaſon is ſo much circumſcribed in its exertions, and never arrives, in its higheſt attainments, at the knowledge of thoſe general principles and maxims, which ſerve as the foundation of ſcience, we may conclude, that the intellectual powers of man in the ſavage ſtate are deſtitute of their proper object, and cannot acquire any conſiderable degree of vigour and enlargement.

Active efforts of the mind few and languid.

From the ſame cauſes, the active efforts of the mind are few, and, on moſt occaſions, languid. If we examine into the motives which rouze men to activity in civilized life, and prompt them to perſevere in fatiguing exertions of their ingenuity or ſtrength, we ſhall find that they ariſe chiefly from acquired wants and appetites. Theſe are numerous and importunate, they keep the mind in perpetual agitation, and, in order to gratify them, invention muſt be always on the ſtretch, and induſtry muſt be inceſſantly employed. But the deſires of ſimple nature are few, and where a favourable climate yields almoſt ſpontaneouſly what ſuffices them, they ſcarcely ſtir the ſoul, or excite any violent emotion. Hence the people of ſeveral tribes in America waſte their life in a liſtleſs indolence. To be free from occupation, ſeems to be all the enjoyment towards which they aſpire. They

* Lafitau, ii. 2.

will

will continue whole days ſtretched out in their hammocs, or ſeated on the earth, in perfect idleneſs, without changing their poſture, or raiſing their eyes from the ground, or uttering a ſingle word *.

Improvident.

SUCH is their averſion to labour, that neither the hope of future good, nor the apprehenſion of future evil, can ſurmount it. They appear equally indifferent to both, diſcovering little ſolicitude, and taking no precautions to avoid the one, or to ſecure the other. The cravings of hunger may rouſe them; but as they devour, with little diſtinction, whatever will appeaſe its inſtinctive demands, the exertions which theſe occaſion are of ſhort duration. Deſtitute of ardour, as well as variety of deſire, they feel not the force of thoſe powerful ſprings which give vigour to the movements of the mind, and urge the patient hand of induſtry to perſevere in its efforts. Man, in ſome parts of America, appears in a form ſo rude, that we can diſcover no effects of his activity, and the principle of underſtanding which ſhould direct it, ſeems hardly to be unfolded. Like the other animals, he has no fixed reſidence; he has erected no habitation to ſhelter him from the inclemency of the weather; he has taken no meaſures for ſecuring a certain ſubſiſtence; he neither ſows nor reaps; but roams about as led in ſearch of the plants and fruits which the earth brings forth in ſucceſſion; and in queſt of the game which he kills in the foreſts, or of the fiſh which he catches in the rivers.

Some variety with reſpect to all theſe.

THIS deſcription, however, applies only to ſome tribes. Man cannot continue long in this ſtate of feeble and uninformed infancy. He was made for induſtry and action, and the powers of his nature,

* Bouguer Voy. au Perou, 102. Borde, 15.

as

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as well as the neceſſity of his condition, urge him to fulfil his deſtiny. Accordingly, among moſt of the American nations, eſpecially thoſe ſeated in rigorous climates, ſome efforts are employed, and ſome previous precautions are taken, for ſecuring ſubſiſtence. The career of regular induſtry is begun, and the laborious arm has made the firſt eſſays of its power. Still, however, the improvident and ſlothful genius of the ſavage ſtate predominates. Even among thoſe more improved tribes, labour is deemed ignominious and degrading. It is only to work of a certain kind that a man will deign to put his hand. The greater part is devolved entirely upon the women. One half of the community remains inactive, while the other is oppreſſed with the multitude and variety of its occupations. Thus their induſtry is partial, and the foreſight which regulates it, is no leſs limited. A remarkable inſtance of this occurs in the chief arrangement with reſpect to their manner of living. They depend for their ſubſiſtence, during one part of the year, on fiſhing; during another, on hunting; during a third, on the produce of their agriculture. Though experience has taught them to foreſee the return of thoſe various ſeaſons, and to make ſome proviſion for their reſpective exigencies, they either want ſagacity to proportion this proviſion to their conſumption, or are ſo incapable of any command over their appetites, that, from their inconſiderate waſte, they often feel the calamities of famine as ſeverely as the rudeſt of the ſavage tribes. What they ſuffer one year does not augment their induſtry, or render them more provident to prevent ſimilar diſtreſſes*. This inconſiderate thoughtleſſneſs about futurity, the effect of ignorance and the

* Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 338. Lettr. Edif. 23. 298. Deſcript. of N. France, Oſborn's Collect. ii. 880. Dela Potherie, ii. 63.

cauſe

cauſe of ſloth, accompanies and characterizes man in every ſtage of ſavage life *; and by a capricious ſingularity in his operations, he is then leaſt ſolicitous about ſupplying his wants, when the means of ſatisfying them are moſt precarious, and procured with the greateſt difficulty †. BOOK IV.

III. AFTER viewing the bodily conſtitution of the Americans, and contemplating the powers of their minds, we are led, in the natural order of inquiry, to conſider them as united together in ſociety. Hitherto our reſearches have been confined to the operations of underſtanding reſpecting themſelves, as individuals, now they will extend to the degree of their ſenſibility and affection towards their ſpecies. Their ſocial ſtate.

THE domeſtic ſtate is the firſt and moſt ſimple form of human aſſociation. The union of the ſexes, among different animals, is of longer or ſhorter duration in proportion to the eaſe or difficulty of rearing their offſpring. Among thoſe tribes where the ſeaſon of infancy is ſhort, and the young ſoon acquire the vigour or agility, no permanent union is formed. Nature commits the care of training up the offſpring to the mother alone, and her tenderneſs, without any other aſſiſtance, is equal to the taſk. But where the ſtate of infancy is long and helpleſs, and the joint aſſiduity of both parents is requiſite in tending their feeble brood, there a more intimate connection takes place, and continues until the purpoſe of nature be accompliſhed, and the new race grow up to full maturity. As the infancy of man is more feeble and helpleſs than that of any other animal, and he is dependent, during a much longer period, on the care and foreſight of his Domeſtic union.

* Bancroft's Nat. Hiſt. of Guiana, 326. 333.

† See NOTE L.

parents,

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parents, the union between husband and wife came early to be considered, not only as a solemn, but as a permanent contract. A general state of promiscuous intercourse between the sexes never existed but in the imagination of poets. In the infancy of society, when men, destitute of arts and industry, lead a hard precarious life, the rearing of their progeny demands the attention and efforts of both parents; and if their union had not been formed and continued with this view, the race could not have been preserved. Accordingly, in America, even among the rudest tribes, a regular union between husband and wife was universal, and the rights of marriage were understood and recognized. In those districts where subsistence was scanty, and the difficulty of maintaining a family was great, the man confined himself to one wife. In warmer or more fertile provinces, the facility of procuring food concurred with the influence of climate, in inducing the inhabitants to increase the number of their wives*. In some countries the marriage union subsisted during life; in others, the impatience of the Americans under restraint of any species, together with their natural levity and caprice, promtped them to dissolve it on very slight pretexts, and often without assigning any cause†.

Condition of women.

But whether they considered the obligation of this contract as perpetual, or only temporary, the condition of women was equally humiliating and miserable. Whether man has been improved by the progress of arts and civilization in society, is a question, which, in the wantonness of disputation, has been agitated among philosophers. That women are indebted to the refinements of polished manners for

* Lettr. Edif. 23. 318. Lafitau Moeurs, i. 554. Lery ap de Bry, iii. 234. Journal Grillet et Bechamel, p. 88.

† Lafitau, i. 580. Joutel Journ. Histor. 345. Lozano Descr. del Gran Chaco, 70. Hennepin Moeurs des Sauvages, p. 30. 33.

a happy

a happy change in their ſtate, is a point which can admit of no doubt To deſpiſe and to degrade the female ſex, is the characteriſtic of the ſavage ſtate in every part of the globe. Man, proud of excelling in ſtrengh and in courage, the chief marks of pre-eminence among rude people, treats woman, as an inferior, with diſdain. The Americans, perhaps from that coldneſs and inſenſibility which has been conſidered as peculiar to their conſtitution, add neglect and harſhneſs to contempt. The moſt intelligent travellers have been ſtruck with this inattention of the Americans to their women. It is not, as I have already obſerved, by a ſtudied diſplay of tenderneſs and attachment, that the American endeavours to gain the heart of the woman whom he wiſhes to marry. Marraige itſelf, inſtead of being an union of affection, and intereſt between equals, becomes, among them, the unnatural conjunction of a maſter with his ſlave. It is the obſervation of an author, whoſe opinions are deſervedly of great weight, that wherever wives are purchaſed, their condition is extremely depreſſed *. They become the property and the ſlaves of thoſe who buy them. In whatever part of the globe this cuſtom prevails, the obſervation holds. In countries where refinement has made ſome progreſs, women, excluded from ſociety, and ſhut up in ſequeſtered apartments, are kept under the vigilant guard of their maſters. In ruder nations, they are degraded to the meaneſt functions. Among many people of America the marriage-contract is properly a purchaſe. The man buys his wife of her parents. Though unacquainted with the uſe of money, or with ſuch commercial tranſactions as take place in more improved ſociety, he knows how to give an equivalent for any object which he deſires to poſſeſs. In ſome places the ſuitor devotes his

* Sketches of Hiſt. of Man, i. 184.

ſervice

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ſervice for a certain time to the parents of the maid whom he courts; in others, he hunts for them occaſionally, or aſſiſts in cultivating their fields, and forming their canoes; in others, he offers preſents of ſuch things as are deemed moſt valuable on account of their uſefulneſs or rarity *. In return for theſe, he receives his wife; and this circumſtance, added to the low eſtimation of women among ſavages, leads him to conſider her as a female ſervant whom he has acquired, and whom he has a title to treat as an inferior. In all unpoliſhed nations, it is true, the functions in domeſtic œconomy, which fall naturally to the ſhare of women, are ſo many, that they are ſubjected to hard labour, and muſt bear more than their full portion of the common burden. But in America their condition is ſo peculiarly grievous, and their depreſſion ſo complete, that ſervitude is a name too mild to deſcribe their wretched ſtate. A wife, among moſt tribes, is no better than a beaſt of burden, deſtined to every office of labour and fatigue. While the men loiter out the day in ſloth, or ſpend it in amuſement, the women are condemned to inceſſant toil. Taſks are impoſed upon them without pity, and ſervices are received without complacence or gratitude †. Every circumſtance reminds women of this mortifying inferiority. They muſt approach their lords with reverence; they muſt regard them as more exalted beings, and are not permitted to eat in their preſence ‡. There are diſtricts in America where this dominion is ſo grievous, and ſo ſenſibly felt that ſome women, in a wild emotion of maternal tenderneſs,

* Lafitau Moeurs &c. i. 560. &c. Charlev. iii. 285, &c. Herrera, dec. 4. lib. iv. c. 7. Dumont, ii. 156. † Tertre, ii. 382. Borde Relat. des Moeurs des Caraibes, p. 21. Biet, 357. Condamine, p. 110. Fermin. i. 79.

‡ Gumilla, i. 153. Barrere, 164. Labat. Voy. ii. 78. Chaunalon, 51. Tertre, ii. 300.

have

have deſtroyed their female children in their infancy, in order to deliver them from that intolerable bondage to which they knew they were doomed *. Thus the firſt inſtitution of ſocial life is perverted. That ſtate of domeſtic union towards which nature leads the human ſpecies, in order to ſoften the heart to gentleneſs and humanity, is rendered ſo unequal, as to eſtabliſh a cruel diſtinction between the ſexes, which forms the one to be harſh and unfeeling, and humbles the other to ſervility and ſubjection.

Their women not prolific.

It is owing, perhaps, in ſome meaſure, to this ſtate of depreſſion, that women in rude nations are far from being prolific †. The vigour of their conſtitution is exhauſted by exceſſive fatigue, and the wants and diſtreſſes of ſavage life are ſo numerous, as to force them to take various precautions in order to prevent too rapid an increaſe of their progeny. Among wandering tribes, or ſuch as depend chiefly upon hunting for ſubſiſtence, the mother cannot attempt to rear a ſecond child, until the firſt has attained ſuch a degree of vigour as to be in ſome meaſure independent of her care. From this motive, it is the univerſal practice of the American women to nurſe their children during ſeveral years ‡; and as they ſeldom marry early, the period of their fertility is over, before they can finiſh the long but neceſſary attendance upon two or three ſucceſſive children §. Among ſome of the leaſt poliſhed tribes, whoſe induſtry and foreſight does not extend ſo far as to make any regular proviſion for their own ſubſiſtence, it is a maxim not to burden themſelves with rearing more than two children ‖; and no ſuch numerous families, as are

* Gumilla, ii. 233. 238. Herrera, dec. 7. lib. ix. c. 4. † Lafitau, i. 590. Charlevoix, iii. 304. ‡ Herrera, dec. 6. lib. i. c. 4. § Charlev. iii. 303. Dumont Mem. ſur Louiſiane, ii. 270. Denys Hiſt. Natur. de l'Amerique, &c. ii. 365. Charlev. Hiſt. de Parag. ii. 422.

‖ Techo's Account of Paraguay, &c. Church. Collect. vi. 108. Lett. Edif. 24. 200. Lozano Deſcr. 92.

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frequent in civilized ſocieties, are to be found among men in this ſtate*. When twins are born, one of them commonly is abandoned, becauſe the mother is not equal to the taſk of educating both †. When a mother dies while ſhe is nurſing a child, all hope of preſerving its life fails, and it is buried together with her in the ſame grave §. As the parents are frequently expoſed to want by their own improvident indolence, the difficulty of ſuſtaining their children becomes ſo great, that it is not uncommon to abandon or deſtroy them ‖. Thus their experience of the difficulty of training up an infant to maturity, amidſt the hardſhips of ſavage life, often ſtifles the voice of nature among the Americans, and ſuppreſſes the ſtrong emotions of parental tenderneſs.

Parental affection, and filial duty.

But, though neceſſity compels the inhabitants of America thus to ſet bounds to the increaſe of their families, they are not deficient in affection and attachment to their offspring. They feel the power of this inſtinct in its full force, and as long as their progeny continue feeble and helpleſs, no people exceed them in tenderneſs and care ‡. But in rude nations, the dependence of children upon their parents is of ſhorter continuance than in poliſhed ſocieties. When men muſt be trained to the various functions of civil life by previous diſcipline and education, when the knowledge of abſtruſe ſciences muſt be taught, and dexterity in intricate arts muſt be acquired before a young man is prepared to be-

* Maccleur's Journal, 63. See NOTE LI.

† Lettr. Edif. x. 200.

§ Charlev. iii. 368. Lett. Edif. x. 200. P. Melch. Hernandez Memor. de Cheriqui. Colbert, Collect. Orig. Pap. i.

‖ Venegas Hiſt. of Californ. i. 82.

‡ Gumilla, i. 211. Biet. 390.

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gin his career of action, the attentive feelings of a parent are not confined to the years of infancy, but extend to the eſtabliſhment of his child in the world. Even then his ſolicitude does not terminate. His protection may ſtill be requiſite, and his wiſdom and experience ſtill prove uſeful guides. Thus a permanent connection is formed; parental tenderneſs is exerciſed, and filial reſpect returned, throughout the whole courſe of life. But in the ſimplicity of the ſavage ſtate, the affection of parents, like the inſtinctive fondneſs of animals, ceaſes almoſt entirely as ſoon as their offspring attain maturity. Little inſtruction fits them for that mode of life to which they are deſtined. The parents, as if their duty were accompliſhed, when they have conducted their children through the helpleſs years of infancy, leave them afterwards at entire liberty. They ſeldom adviſe or admoniſh, they never chide or chaſtiſe them. They ſuffer them to be abſolute maſters of their own actions *. In an American hut, a father, a mother, and their poſterity, live together like perſons aſſembled by accident, without ſeeming to feel the obligation of the duties mutually ariſing from this connection †. As filial love is not cheriſhed by the continuance of attention or good offices, the recollection of benefits received in early infancy is too faint to excite it. Conſcious of their own liberty, and impatient of reſtraint, the youth of America are accuſtomed to act as if they were totally independent. Their parents are not objects of greater regard than other perſons. They treat them always with neglect, and often with ſuch harſhneſs and inſolence, as to fill thoſe who have been witneſſes of their conduct with

* Charlev. iii. 272. Biet. 390. Gumilla, i. 212. Lafitau, i. 602. Creuxi, Hiſt. Canad. p. 71. Fernandez, Relac. Hiſt. de los Chequit. 33. † Charlev. Hiſt. N. Fr. iii. 273.

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horror *. Thus the ideas which ſeem to be natural to man in his ſavage ſtate, as they reſult from his circumſtances and condition in that period of his progreſs, affect the two capital relations in domeſtic life. They render the union between huſband and wife unequal. They ſhorten the duration, and weaken the force of the connection between parents and children.

Political inſtitutions.

IV. From the domeſtic ſtate of the Americans, the tranſition is natural to the conſideration of their civil government and political inſtitutions. In every inquiry concerning the operations of men when united together in ſociety, the firſt object of attention ſhould be their mode of ſubſiſtence. Accordingly as that varies, their laws and policy muſt be different. The inſtitutions ſuited to the ideas and exigencies of tribes, which ſubſiſt chiefly by fiſhing or hunting, and which have hardly formed a conception of any ſpecies of property, will be much more ſimple than thoſe which muſt take place when the earth is cultivated with regular induſtry, and a right of property, not only in its productions, but in the ſoil itſelf, is completely aſcertained.

Mode of ſubſiſtence.

All the people of America, now under review, belong to the former claſs. But though they may all be comprehended under the general denomination of ſavage, the advances which they had made in the art of procuring to themſelves a certain and plentiful ſubſiſtence, were very unequal. On the vaſt plains of South America, man appears in one

* Gumilla, i. 212. Tertre, ii. 376. Charlev. Hiſt. de N. France, iii. 309. Charlev. Hiſt. de Parag. i. 115. Lezano, Deſcrip. del Grand Chaco, p. 68. 100, 101. Fernand. Relac. Hiſtor. de los Chiquit. 426.

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of the rudeſt ſtates in which he has been ever obſerved, or, perhaps, can exiſt. Several tribes depend entirely upon the bounty of nature for ſubſiſtence. They diſcover no ſolicitude, they employ little foreſight, they ſcarcely exert any induſtry, to ſecure what is neceſſary for their ſupport. The *Topayers* of Braſil, the *Guaxeros* of Tierra-Firme, the *Caiguas*, the *Moxos*, and ſeveral other people of Paraguay, are unacquainted with every ſpecies of cultivation. They neither ſow nor plant. Even the culture of the manioc, of which caſſada bread is made, is an art too intricate for their ingenuity, or too fatiguing to their indolence. The roots which the earth produces ſpontaneouſly, the fruits, the berries, and ſeeds, which they gather in the woods, together with lizards and other reptiles, which the heat engenders in a fat ſoil, moiſtened by frequent rains, ſupply them with food during ſome part of the year *. At other times they ſubſiſt by fiſhing; and nature ſeems to have indulged the lazineſs of the people, by the liberality with which ſhe miniſters, in this way, to their wants. The vaſt rivers of South America abound with an infinite variety of the moſt delicate fiſh. The lakes and marſhes, formed by the annual overflowing of the waters, are filled with all the different ſpecies, where they remain ſhut up, as in natural reſervoirs, for the uſe of the inhabitants. They ſwarm in ſuch ſhoals, that in ſome places they are catched without art or induſtry †. In others, the natives have diſcovered a method of infecting the water with the juice of certain plants, by which the

By fiſhing.

* Nicuhoff. Hiſt. of Braſil. Church Col. ii. 134. Simon. Conquiſta de Tierra Firme, p. 166. Techo, Account of Paraguay, &c. Church. vi. 78. Lettr. Edif. 23. 384. 10. 190. Lozano, Deſcrip. del Gran Chaco, p. 81. Ribas, Hiſtor. de los triunfos, &c. p. 7. † See NOTE LII.

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fish are so intoxicated, that they float on the surface, and are taken with the hand *. Some tribes have ingenuity enough to preserve them without salt, by drying or smoking them upon hurdles over a slow fire †. The prolific quality of the rivers in South-America induces many of the natives to resort to their banks, and to depend almost entirely for nourishment on what their waters supply with such profusion ‡. In this part of the globe, hunting seems not to have been the first employment of men, or the first effort of their invention and labour to obtain food. They were fishers before they became hunters; and as the occupations of the former do not call for equal exertions of activity, or talents, with those of the latter, people in that state appear to possess neither the same degree of enterprise, nor of ingenuity. The petty nations adjacent to the Maragnon and Orinoco, are manifestly the most inactive and least intelligent of all the Americans.

By hunting.

None but tribes contiguous to great rivers can sustain themselves in this manner. The greater part of the American nations, dispersed over the forests with which their country is covered, do not procure subsistence with the same facility. For although these forests, especially in the southern continent of America, are stored plentifully with game §, considerable efforts of activity and ingenuity are requisite in pursuit of it. Necessity incited them to the one, and taught them the other. Hunting became their principal occupation; and as it called forth strenuous exertions of courage, of force, and of invention, it was deemed a function

* See NOTE LIII. † Condam. 159. Gumilla, ii. 37. Lettr. Edif. 14. 199. 23. 328. Acugna, Relat. de la Riv. des Amaz. 138. ‡ Barrere, Relat. de Fr. Equin. p. 155. § P. Martyr. Decad. p. 324. Gumilla, ii. 4, &c. Acugna, i. 156.

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no leſs honourable than neceſſary. This was peculiar to the men. They were trained to it from their earlieſt youth. A bold and dextrous hunter ranked next in fame to the diſtinguiſhed warrior, and an alliance with the former is often courted in preference to one with the latter *. Hardly any device, which the ingenuity of man has diſcovered for enſnaring or deſtroying wild animals, was unknown to the Americans. While engaged in this favourite exerciſe, they ſhake off the indolence peculiar to their nature, the latent powers and vigour of their minds are rouſed, and they become active, perſevering, and indefatigable. Their ſagacity in finding their prey, and their addreſs in killing it, are equal. Their reaſon and their ſenſes, being conſtantly directed towards this one object, the former diſplays ſuch fertility of invention, and the latter acquire ſuch a degree of acuteneſs, as appear almoſt incredible. They diſcern the footſteps of a wild beaſt, which eſcape every other eye, and can follow them with certainty through the pathleſs foreſt. If they attack their game openly, their arrow ſeldom errs from the mark †; if they endeavour to circumvent it by art, it is almoſt impoſſible to avoid their toils. Among ſeveral tribes, their young men were not permitted to marry, until they had given ſuch proofs of their ſkill in hunting as put it beyond doubt that they were capable of providing for a family. Their ingenuity always on the ſtretch, and ſharpened by emulation, as well as neceſſity, has ſtruck out many inventions, which greatly facilitate ſucceſs in the chaſe. The moſt ſingular of theſe is the diſcovery of a poiſon, in which they dip the arrows employed in hunting. The ſlighteſt wound with thoſe envenomed ſhafts

* Charlev. Hiſtoire de la N. France, iii. 115.

† Biet Voy. de France Equin. 357. Davies' Diſcov. of the River of Amaz. Purchaſ. iv. p. 1287.

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BOOK IV. is mortal. If they only pierce the ſkin, the blood fixes and congeals in a moment, and the ſtrongeſt animal fall motionleſs to the ground. Nor does this poiſon, notwithſtanding its violence and ſubtlety, infect the fleſh of the animal which it kills. That may be eaten with perfect ſafety, and retains its native reliſh and qualities. All the nations along the Maragnon and Orinoco are acquainted with this compoſition, the chief ingredient in which is the juice extracted from the root of the *curare*, a ſpecies of withe *. In other parts of America, they employ the juice of the *manchenille* for the ſame purpoſe, and it operates with a no leſs fatal activity. To people poſſeſſed of thoſe ſecrets, the bow is a more deſtructive weapon than the muſket, and in their ſkilful hands, does great execution among the birds and beaſts which abound in the foreſts of America.

By Agriculture.

But the life of a hunter gradually leads man to a ſtate more advanced. The chaſe, even where prey is abundant, and the dexterity of the hunter much improved, affords but an uncertain maintenance, and at ſome ſeaſons it muſt be ſuſpended altogether. If a ſavage truſts to his bow alone for food, he and his family will often be reduced to extreme diſtreſs §. Hardly any region of the earth furniſhes man ſpontaneouſly with what his wants require, in the mildeſt climates, and moſt fertile ſoils, his own induſtry and foreſight muſt be exerted, in ſome degree, to ſecure a regular ſupply of food. Their experience of this ſurmounts the abhorrence of labour natural to ſavage nations, and compels them to have recourſe to culture, as ſubſidiary to hunting. In particular ſituations ſome ſmall tribes may ſubſiſt

* Gumilla, ii. 1, &c. Condam. 208. Recherch. Philoſ. ii. 239. Bancroft Nat. Hiſt. of Guiana, 281, &c.

§ See NOTE LIV.

by

by fiſhing, independent of any production of the earth, raiſed by their own induſtry. But throughout all America, we ſcarcely meet with any nation of hunters, which does not practiſe ſome ſpecies of cultivation. BOOK IV.

The various fruits of their culture.

THEIR agriculture, however, is neither extenſive nor laborious. As game and fiſh are their principal food, all they aim at by cultivation, is to ſupply any occaſional defect of theſe. In the ſouthern continent of America, the natives confined their induſtry to rearing a few plants, which, in a rich ſoil and warm climate, were eaſily trained to maturity. The chief of theſe is *Maize*, well known in Europe by the name of Turkey or Indian wheat, a grain extremely prolific, of ſimple culture, agreeable to the taſte, and affording a ſtrong hearty nouriſhment. The ſecond is the *manioc*, which grows to the ſize of a large ſhrub, or ſmall tree, and produces roots ſomewhat reſembling parſnips. After carefully ſqueezing out the juice, theſe roots are grated down to a fine powder, and formed into thin cakes, called *Caſſada* bread, which, though inſipid to the taſte, proves no contemptible food *. As the juice of the manioc is a deadly poiſon, ſome authors have celebrated the ingenuity of the Americans, in converting a noxious plant into wholeſome nouriſhment. But it ſhould rather be conſidered as one of the deſperate expedients for procuring ſubſiſtence, to which neceſſity reduces rude nations; or, perhaps, men were led to the uſe of it by a progreſs, in which there is nothing marvellous. One ſpecies of manioc is altogether free of any poiſonous quality, and may be eaten without any preparation but that of roaſting it in the embers. This it is probable, was

* Sloane Hiſt. of Jam. Introd. p. 18. Labat. i. 394. Acoſta Hiſt. Ind. Occid. Natur. lib. iv. c. 17. Ulloa, i. 62. Aublet Mem. ſur le Magnioc. Hiſt. des Plantes, tom. ii. p. 65, &c.

firſt

BOOK IV. firſt uſed by the Americans as food; and neceſſity having gradually taught them the art of ſeparating its pernicious juice from the other ſpecies, they have by experience found it to be the moſt prolific as well as the moſt nouriſhing plant of the two *. The third is the *plaintain*, which though it riſes to the height of a tree, is of ſuch quick growth, that in leſs than a year it rewards the induſtry of the cultivator with its fruit. This, when roaſted, ſupplies the place of bread, and is both palatable and nouriſhing †. The fourth is the *potatoe*, whoſe culture and qualities are too well known to need any deſcription. The fifth is *pimento*, a ſmall tree, yielding a ſtrong aromatic ſpice. The Americans, who, like other inhabitants of warm climates, delight in whatever is hot and of poignant flavour, deem this ſeaſoning a neceſſary of life, and mingle it copiouſly with every kind of food they take §.

SUCH are the various productions, which were the chief object of culture among the hunting tribes on the continent of America, and with a moderate exertion of active and provident induſtry, theſe might have yielded a full ſupply to the wants of a numerous people. But men accuſtomed to the free and vagrant life of hunters, are incapable of regular application to labour; and conſider agriculture as a ſecondary and inferior occupation. Accordingly the proviſion for ſubſiſtence, ariſing from cultivation, was ſo limited and ſcanty among the Americans, that, upon any accidental failure of their uſual ſucceſs in hunting, they were often reduced to extreme diſtreſs.

* Martyr decad. 301. Labat. i. 411. Gumilla, iii. 192. Machuca Milic Indiana, 164. See NOTE LV.

† See NOTE LVI. § Gumilla, iii, 171. Acoſta, lib. iv. c. 20.

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In the islands, the mode of subsisting was considerably different. None of the large animals which abound on the continent were known there. Only four species of quadrupeds, besides a kind of small dumb dog, existed in the islands, the biggest of which did not exceed the size of a rabbit *. To hunt such diminutive prey, was an occupation which required no effort either of activity or courage. The chief employment of a hunter in the isles was to kill birds, which on the continent are deemed ignoble game, and left chiefly to the pursuit of boys †. This want of animals, as well as their peculiar situation, led the islanders to depend principally upon fishing for their subsistence ‡. Their rivers, and the sea with which they are surrounded, supplied them with this species of food. At some particular seasons, turtle, crabs; and other shell-fish, abounded in such numbers, that they could support themselves with a facility in which their indolence delighted §. At other times, they ate lizards, and various reptiles of odious forms ‖. To fishing, the inhabitants of the island added some degree of agriculture. Maize ¶, manioc, and other plants, were cultivated in the same manner as on the continent. But all the fruits of their industry, together with what their soil and climate produced spontaneously, afforded them but a scanty maintenance. Though their demands for food were very sparing, they hardly raised what was sufficient for their own consumption. If a few Spaniards settled in any district, such a small addition, of supernumerary mouths soon exhausted their scanty stores, and brought on a famine.

Their agriculture very limited.

* Oviedo, lib. xii. in proem. † Ribas Hist. de los triumph. p. 13. De la Potherie, ii. 33. iii. 20. ‡ Oviedo, lib. xiii. c. 1. Gomara Hist. Gener. c. 28. § Gomara Hist. Gener. c. 9. Labat, ii. 221, &c. ‖ Oviedo, lib. xiii. c. 3. ¶ See NOTE LVII.

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Two causes of its imperfection.

Two circumstances, common to all the savage nations of America, concurred with those which I have already mentioned, not only in rendering their agriculture imperfect, but in circumscribing their power in all their operations. They had no tame animals; and they were unacquainted with the use of metals.

The want of tame animals.

In other parts of the globe, man, in his rudest state appears as lord of the creation, giving law to various tribes of animals, which he has tamed and reduced to subjection. The Tartar follows his prey on the horse which he has reared; or tends his numerous herds, which furnish him both with food and clothing; the Arab has rendered the camel docile, and avails himself of its persevering strength; the Laplander has formed the rein-deer to be subservient to his will; and even the people of Kamchatka have trained their dogs to labour. This command over the inferior creatures is one of the noblest prerogatives of man, and among the greatest efforts of his wisdom and power. Without this, his dominion is incomplete. He is a monarch, who has no subjects; a master, without servants, and must perform every operation by the strength of his own arm. Such was the condition of all the rude nations in America. Their reason was so little improved, or their union so incomplete, that they seem not to have been conscious of the superiority of their nature, and suffered all the animal creation to retain its liberty, without establishing their own authority over any one species. Most of the animals, indeed, which have been rendered domestic in our continent, do not exist in the New World; but those peculiar to it are neither so fierce, nor so formidable, as to have exempted them from servitude. There are some animals of the same species in both continents. But the rein-deer, which has

has been tamed and broken to the yoke in the one hemiſphere, runs wild in the other. The *biſon* of America is manifeſtly of the ſame ſpecies with the horned cattle of the other hemiſphere *. Theſe, even among the rudeſt nations in our continent, have been rendered domeſtic; and in conſequence of his dominion over them, man can accompliſh works of labour with greater facility, and has made a vaſt addition to his means of ſubſiſtence. The inhabitants of many regions in the New World, where the biſon abounds, might have derived the ſame advantages from it. It is not of a nature ſo indocile, but that it might have been trained to be as ſubſervient to man as our cattle †. But a ſavage, in that uncultivated ſtate wherein the Americans were diſcovered, is the enemy of the other animals, not their ſuperior. He waſtes and deſtroys, but knows not how to multiply or to govern them §.

THIS, perhaps, is the moſt notable diſtinction between the inhabitants of the Ancient and New Worlds, and a high pre-eminence of civilized men above ſuch as continue rude. The greateſt operations of man in changing and improving the face of nature, as well as his moſt conſiderable efforts in cultivaing the earth, are accompliſhed by means of the aid which he receives from the animals whom he has tamed and employs in labour. It is by their ſtrength that he ſubdues the ſtubborn ſoil, and converts the deſert or marſh into a fruitful field. But man, in his civilized ſtate, is ſo accuſtomed to the ſervice of the domeſtic animals, that he ſeldom reflects upon the vaſt benefits which he derives from it. If we were to ſuppoſe him, even when moſt improved,

* Buffon, Artic. *biſon.* † Nouv. Decouverte per Henepin, p. 192. Kalm. i. 207. § Buffon Hiſt. Nat. ix. 85. Hiſt. Philoſ. et Polit. des Etabliſſem. des Europ. dans les deux Indes, vi. 364.

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to be deprived, of their uſeful miniſtry, his empire over nature muſt in ſome meaſure ceaſe, and he would remain a feeble animal, at a loſs how to ſubſiſt, and incapable of attempting ſuch arduous undertakings as their aſſiſtance enables him to execute with eaſe.

Want of the uſeful metals.

It is a doubtful point, whether the dominion of man over the animal creation, or his acquiring the uſe of metals, has contributed moſt to extend his power. The æra of this important diſcovery is unknown, and in our hemiſphere very remote. It is only by tradition, or digging up ſome rude inſtruments of our forefathers, that we learn that mankind were originally unacquainted with the uſe of metals, and endeavoured to ſupply the want of them by employing flints, ſhells, bones, and other hard ſubſtances, for the ſame purpoſes which metals ſerve among poliſhed nations. Nature completes the formation of ſome metals. Gold, ſilver, and copper, are found in their perfect ſtate, in the clefts of rocks, in the ſides of mountains, or the channels of rivers. Theſe were accordingly the metals firſt known, and firſt applied to uſe. But iron, the moſt ſerviceable of all, and to which man is moſt indebted, is never diſcovered in its perfect form; its groſs and ſtubborn ore muſt feel twice the force of fire, and go through two laborious proceſſes, before it becomes fit for uſe. Man was long acquainted with the other metals, before he acquired the art of fabricating iron, or attained ſuch ingenuity as to perfect an invention, to which he is indebted for thoſe inſtruments wherewith he ſubdues the earth, and commands all its inhabitants. But in this, as well as in many other reſpects, the inferiority of the Americans was conſpicuous. All the ſavage tribes, ſcattered over the continent and iſlands, were

were totally unacquainted with the metals which the ſoil produces in great abundance, if we except ſome trifling quantity of gold, which they picked up in the torrents that deſcended from their mountains, and formed into ornaments. Their devices, to ſupply this want of the ſerviceable metals, were extremely rude and aukward. The moſt ſimple operation was to them an undertaking of immenſe difficulty and labour. To fell a tree with no other inſtruments than hatchets of ſtone, was employment for a month*. To form a canoe into ſhape, and to hollow it, conſumed years; and it frequently began to rot before they were able to finiſh it†. Their operations in agriculture were equally ſlow and defective. In a country covered with woods of the hardeſt timber, the clearing of a ſmall field deſtined for culture required the united afforts of a tribe, and was a work of much time and great toil. This was the buſineſs of the men, and their indolence was ſatisfied with performing it in a very ſlovenly manner. The labour of cultivation was left to the women, who after digging, or rather ſtirring the field, with wooden mattocks, and ſtakes hardened in the fire, ſowed or planted it; but were more indebted for the increaſe to the fertility of the ſoil, than to their own rude induſtry‡.

AGRICULTURE, even when the ſtrength of man is ſeconded by that of the animals which he has ſubjected to the yoke, and his power augmented by the uſe of the various inſtruments with which the diſcovery of metals has furniſhed him, is ſtill a work of great labour, and it is with the ſweat of his brow that he renders the earth fertile. It is not wonderful, then, that people deſtitute of both theſe advantages

* Gumilla, iii. 196. † Borde Relat. des Caraibes, p. 22.
‡ Gumilla, iii. 166, &c. Lettr. Edif. xii. 10.

ſhould

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should have made so little progress in cultivation, that they must be considered as depending for subsistence on fishing and hunting, rather than on the fruits of their own labour.

Political institutions arising from this state.

FROM this description of the mode of subsisting among the rude American tribes, the form and genius of their political institutions may be deduced, and we are enabled to trace various circumstances of distinction between them and more civilized nations.

1. Divided into small communities.

1. THEY were divided into small independent communities. While hunting is the chief source of subsistence, a vast extent of territory is requisite for supporting a small number of people. In proportion as men multiply and unite, the wild animals, on which they pray, diminish, or fly at a greater distance from the haunts of their enemy. The increase of a society in this state is limited by its own nature, and the members of it must either disperse, like the game which they pursue, or fall upon some better method of procuring food, than by hunting. Beasts of prey are by nature solitary and unsocial, they go not forth to the chase in herds, but delight in those recesses of the forest where they can roam and destroy undisturbed. A nation of hunters resembles them, both in occupation and in genius. They cannot form into large communities, because it would be impossible to find subsistence, and they must drive to a distance every rival who may encroach on those domains, which they consider as ther own. This was the state of all the American tribes, the numbers in each were small, though scattered over vast countries; they were far removed from one another, and engaged in

in perpetual hoſtilities or rivalſhip *. In America, the word *nation* is not of the ſame import as in other parts of the globe. It is applied to ſmall ſocieties, not exceeding, perhaps, two or three hundred perſons, but occupying provinces larger than ſome kingdoms in Europe. The country of Guiana, though of larger extent than the kingdom of France, and divided among a great number of nations, did not contain above twenty-five thouſand inhabitants †. In the provinces which border on the Orinoco, one may travel ſeveral hundred miles in different directions, without finding a ſingle hut, or obſerving the footſteps of a human creature ‡. In North-America, where the climate is more rigorous, and the ſoil leſs fertile, the deſolation is ſtill greater. There, vaſt journeys of ſome hundred leagues have been made through uninhabited plains and foreſts §. As long as hunting continues to be the chief employment of man to which he truſts for ſubſiſtence, he can hardly be ſaid to have occupied the earth ‖.

Unacquainted with the idea of property.

2. NATIONS which depend upon hunting are ſtrangers to the idea of property. As the animals on which the hunter feeds are not bred under his inſpection, nor nouriſhed by his care, he can claim no right to them, while they run wild in the foreſt. Where game is ſo plentiful that it may be catched with little trouble, men never dream of appropriating what is of ſmall value, or of eaſy acquiſition. Where it is ſo rare, that the labour or danger of the chaſe requires the united efforts of a tribe, or

* Lozano, Deſcrip. del Gran Chaco, 59, 62. Fernandez, Relac. Hiſt. de los Chiquit. 162. † Voyages de Marchais, iv. 353. ‡ Gumilla, ii. 101.

§ M. Fabry, quoted by Buffon, iii. 488. Lafitau, ii. 179. Boſſu, Travels through Louiſiana, i. 111. See NOTE LVIII.

‖ See NOTE LIX.

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village, what is killed is a common ſtock, belonging equally to all, who by their ſkill or their courage, have contributed to the ſucceſs of the excurſion. The foreſt, or hunting grounds, are deemed the property of the tribe, from which it has a title to exclude every rival nation. But no individual arrogates a right to any diſtrict of theſe, in preference to his fellow-citizens. They belong alike to all; and thither, as to a general and undivided ſtore, all repair in queſt of ſuſtenance. The ſame principles, by which they regulate their chief occupation, extend to that which is ſubordinate. Even agriculture has not introduced among them a complete idea of property. As the men hunt, the women labour together, and after they have ſhared the toils of the ſeed-time, they enjoy the harveſt in common *. Among ſome tribes, the increaſe of their cultivated lands is depoſited in a public granary, and divided among them, at ſtated times according to their wants †. Among others, though they lay up ſeparate ſtores, they do not acquire ſuch an excluſive right of property, that they can enjoy ſuperfluity, while thoſe around them ſuffer want ‡. Thus the diſtinctions ariſing from the inequality of poſſeſſions are unknown. The terms rich or poor enter not into their language, and being ſtrangers to property, they are unacquainted with that, which is the great object of laws and policy, as well as the chief motive which induced mankind to eſtabliſh the various arrangements of regular government §.

High ſenſe of equality and independence.

3. PEOPLE in this ſtate retain a high ſenſe of equality and independence. Wherever the idea of property is not eſtabliſhed, there can be no

* Dr. Ferguſon's Eſſay, 125. † Gumilla, i. 265. Brickell, Hiſt. of N. Carol. 327. See NOTE LX.

‡ Denys, Hiſt. Natur. ii. 392, 393. § P. Martyr, Decad. p. 45. Veneg. Hiſt. of Californ. i. 66. Lery, Navig. in Braſil, c. 17.

diſtinction

distinction among men, but what arises from personal qualities. These can be conspicuous only on such occasions as call them forth into exertion. In times of danger, or in affairs of intricacy, the wisdom and experience of age are consulted, and prescribe the measures which ought to be pursued. When they take the field against the enemies of their country, the warrior of most approved courage leads the youth to the combat *. If they go forth in a body to the chase, the most expert and adventurous hunter is foremost, and directs their motions. But during seasons of tranquillity and inaction, when there is no occasion to display those talents, all pre-eminence ceases. Every circumstance indicates, that all the members of the community are on a level. They are clothed in the same simple garb. They feed on the same plain fare. Their houses and furniture are exactly similar. No distinction can arise from the inequality of possessions. Whatever forms dependence on one part, or constitutes superiority on the other, is unknown. All are freemen, all feel themselves to be such, and assert with firmness the rights which belong to that condition †. This sentiment of independence is imprinted so deeply in their nature, that no change of condition can eradicate it and bend their minds to servitude. Accustomed to be absolute masters of their own conduct, they disdain to execute the orders of another, and having never known control, will not submit to correction ‡. Many of the Americans, when they found that they were treated as slaves by Spaniards, died of grief; many destroyed themselves in despair §.

* Acosta, Hist. lib. vi. c. 19. Stadius, Hist. Brasil, lib. ii. c. 13. De Bry, iii. p. 110. Biet, 361. † Labat. vi. 124. Brickell. Hist. of Carol. 310.

‡ See NOTE LXI. § Oviedo, lib. iii. c. 6. p. 97. Vega, Conquist. de la Florida, i. 30. ii. 416. Labat. ii. 138. Benzo Hist Nov. Orb. lib. iv. c. 25.

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Sense of subordination imperfect.

4. Among people in this state, government can assume little authority, and the sense of civil subordination must remain very imperfect. While the idea of property is unknown, or incompletely conceived, and the spontaneous productions of the earth, as well as the fruits of industry, are considered as belonging to the public stock, there can hardly be any such subject of difference or discussion among the members of the same community, as will require the hand of authority to interpose in order to adjust it. Where the right of separate and exclusive possession is not introduced, the great object of law and jurisdiction does not exist. When called into the field, either in their own defence, or to invade the territories of their enemies, when engaged in the toil and dangers of the chase, the members of a tribe perceive that they are part of a political body. They are conscious of their own connection with the companions in conjunction with whom they act; and they follow and reverence such as excel in conduct and valour. But during the intervals between such common efforts, they are scarcely conscious of the ties of political union *. No visible form of government is established. The names of *magistrate* and *subject* are not in use. Every one seems to enjoy his natural indpendence almost entire. If a scheme of public utility be proposed, the members of the community are left at liberty to chuse whether they will assist or not in carrying it into execution. No statute imposes any service as a duty, no compulsory laws oblige them to perform it. All their resolutions are voluntary, and flow from the impulse of their own minds †. The first step towards establishing

* Lozano, Descr. del Grand Chaco, 93. Melendez Teforos Verdaderos, ii. 23. See NOTE LXII.

† Charlev. Hist. France, iii. 266. 268.

a public

a public juriſdiction has not been taken in thoſe rude ſocieties. The right of revenge is left in private hands *: If violence is committed, or blood is ſhed, the community does not aſſume the power either of inflicting or of moderating the puniſhment. It belongs to the family and friends of the perſon injured or ſlain to revenge the wrong, or to accept of the reparation offered by the aggreſſor. If the elders interpoſe, it is to adviſe, not to decide, and it is ſeldom their councils are liſtened to; for as it is deemed puſillanimous to ſuffer an offender to eſcape with impunity, reſentment is implacable and everlaſting †. The object of government among ſavages is rather foreign than domeſtic. They do not aim at maintaining interior order and police by public regulations, or the exertions of any permanent authority, but labour to preſerve ſuch union among the members of their tribe, that they may watch the motions of their enemies, and act againſt them with concert and vigour.

To what people thoſe deſcriptions apply.

SUCH was the form of political order eſtabliſhed among the greater part of the American nations. In this ſtate were moſt of the tribes, ſpread over the vaſt provinces extending eaſtward of the Miſſiſſippi, from the mouth of the St. Laurence to the confines of Florida. In a ſimilar condition were the people of Braſil, the inhabitants of Chili, and ſeveral tribes in Paraguay and Guiana, and in the countries which ſtretch from the mouth of the Orinoco to the peninſula of Yucatan. Among ſuch an infinite number of petty aſſociations, there may be peculiarities which conſtitute a diſtinction, and mark the various degrees of their civilization and

* Herrera, dec. 8. lib. iv. c. 8. † Charlev. Hiſt N. France, iii. 271, 272. Laſit. i. 486. Caſſani Hiſt. de Nuevo Reyno de Granada, 226.

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improvement. But an attempt to trace and enumerate these would be vain, as they have not been observed by persons, capable of discerning the minute and delicate circumstances, which serve to discriminate nations resembling one another in their general character and features. The description which I have given will apply, with little variation, to the policy of every people in America, which to fishing and hunting had added some degree of agriculture.

Rude and imperfect as those institutions may appear, several tribes were not so far advanced in their political progress. Among all those petty nations which trusted for subsistence entirely to fishing and hunting without any species of cultivation, the union was so incomplete, and their sense of mutual dependence so feeble, that hardly any appearance of government or order can be discerned in their proceedings. Their wants are few, their objects of pursuit simple, they form into separate tribes, and act together, from instinct, habit, or conveniency, rather than from any formal concert and association. To this class belong the Californians, several of the small nations in the extensive country of Paraguay, some of the people on the banks of the Orinoco, and on the river St. Magdalene, in the new kingdom of Granada *.

Some irregular appearances.

But though among these last-mentioned tribes there was hardly any shadow of regular government, and even among those which I first described, its authority is slender and confined within narrow bounds, there were some places in America where

* Venegas, i. 68. Lettr. Edif. ii. 176. Techo. Hist. of Parag. Churchil, vi. 78. Hist. Gen. des Voyages, xiv. 74.

it

it was carried far beyond the degree which ſeems natural to rude nations. In ſurveying the political operations of man, either in his ſavage or civilized ſtate, we diſcover ſingular and excentric inſtitutions, which ſtart as it were from their ſtation, and fly off ſo wide that we labour in vain to bring them within the general laws of any ſyſtem, or to account for them by thoſe principles which influence other communities in a ſimilar ſituation. Some inſtances of this occur among thoſe people of America, whom I have included under the common denomination of ſavage. Theſe are ſo curious and important that I ſhall deſcribe them, and attempt to explain their origin.

Particularly in ſome of the warmer regions.

In the New World, as well as in other parts of the globe, cold or temperate countries appear to be the favourite ſeat of freedom and independence. There the mind, like the body, is firm and vigorous. Conſcious of their own dignity, and capable of the greateſt efforts in aſſerting it, men aſpire to indpendence, and their ſtubborn ſpirits ſtoop with reluctance to the yoke of ſervitude. In warmer climates, by whoſe influence the whole frame is ſo much enervated, that preſent pleaſure is the ſupreme felicity, and mere repoſe is enjoyment, men acquieſce, almoſt without a ſtruggle, in the dominion of a ſuperior. Accordingly, if we proceed from north to ſouth along the continent of America, we ſhall find the power of thoſe veſted with authority gradually increaſing, and the ſpirit of the people becoming more tame and paſſive. In Florida, the authority of the ſachems, caziques, or chiefs, was not only permanent, but hereditary. They were diſtinguiſhed by peculiar ornaments, they enjoyed prerogatives of various kinds, and were treated by their ſubjects with that reverence, which people accuſtomed to ſubjection,

pay

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Among the Natchez.

to a maſter *. Among the nation of the Natchez, ſituated on the banks of the Miſſiſſippi, a difference of rank took place, with which the northern tribes were altogether unacquainted. Some families were reputed noble, and enjoyed hereditary dignity. The body of the people was conſidered as vile, and formed only for ſubjection. This diſtinction was marked by appellations which intimated the high elevation of the one ſtate, and the ignominious depreſſion of the other. The former were called *Reſpectable*; the latter, the *Stinkards*. The great Chief, in whom the ſupreme authority was veſted, is reputed to be a being of ſuperior nature, the brother of the Sun, the ſole object of their worſhip. They approach him with religious veneration, and honour him as the repreſentative of their deity. His will is a law, to which all ſubmit with implicit obedience. The lives of his ſubjects are ſo abſolutely at his diſpoſal, that if any one has incurred his diſpleaſure, he comes with profound humility and offers him his head. Nor does their dominion end with their lives; their principal officers, their favourite wives, together with many domeſtics of inferior rank, are ſacrificed at their tombs, that they may be attended in the next world by the ſame perſons who ſerved them in this; and ſuch is the reverence in which they are held, that thoſe victims welcome death with exultation, deeming it a recompence of their fidelity and a mark of diſtinction, to be ſelected to accompany their deceaſed maſter †. Thus a perfect deſpotiſm, with its full train of ſuperſtition, arrogance and cruelty, is eſtabliſhed among the Natchez, and by a ſingular

* Cardenas y Cano Enfuyo Chrinol. à la Hiſt. de Florida, p. 46. Le Moyne de Morgues Jeones Floridæ. Ap. de Bry. p. 1. 4, &c. Charlev. Hiſt. N. France, iii. 467, 468.

† Dumont Memoir Hiſt. ſur Louiſiane, i. 175. Charlev. Hiſt. N. France, iii. 419. &c. Lettr. Edif. 20. 106. 111.

fatality,

fatality, that people has tasted of the worst calamities incident to polished nations, though they themselves are not far advanced beyond the tribes around them in civility and improvement. In Hispaniola, Cuba, and the larger islands, their caziques or chiefs possessed extensive power. The dignity was transmitted by hereditary right from father to son. Its honours and prerogatives were considerable. Their subjects paid great respect to the caziques, and executed their orders without hesitation or reserve *. They were distinguished by peculiar ornaments, and in order to preserve or augment the veneration of the people, they had the address to call in the aid of superstition to uphold their authority. They delivered their mandates as the oracles of heaven, and pretended to possess the power of regulating the seasons, and of dispensing rain or sunshine, according as their subjects stood in need of them.

In the Islands.

In some parts of the continent, the power of the caziques seems to have been as extensive as in the isles. In Bogota, which is now a province of the New kingdom of Granada, there was settled a nation, more considerable in number, and more improved in the various arts of life, than any people in America except the Mexicans and Peruvians. They subsisted chiefly by agriculture. The idea of property was introduced among them, and its rights secured by laws, handed down by tradition, and observed with great care †. They lived in large towns. They were clothed in a decent manner, and their houses may be termed commodious, when compared with those of the peo-

In Bogota.

* Herrara, dec. 1. lib. i. c. 16. lib. iii. c. 44. p. 88. Life of Columb. ch. 32. † Piedrahita Hist. de las conquist. del N. reyno de Gran. p. 46.

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ple around them. The effects of this uncommon civilization were conſpicuous. Government had aſſumed a regular form. A juriſdiction was eſtabliſhed, which took cognizance of different crimes, and puniſhed them with rigour. A diſtinction of ranks was known; their chief, to whom the Spaniards gave the title of monarch, and who merited that name on account of his ſplendor as well as power, reigned with abſolute authority. He was attended by officers of various conditions; he never appeared in public without a numerous retinue; he was carried in a ſort of palanquin with much pomp, and harbingers went before him to ſweep the road and ſtrew it with flowers. This uncommon pomp was ſupported by preſents or taxes received from his ſubjects, to whom their prince was ſuch an object of veneration, that none of them preſumed to look him directly in the face, or ever approach him but with an averted countenance *. There were other tribes on the ſame continent, among which, though far leſs advanced than the people of Bogota in their progreſs towards refinement, the freedom and independence, natural to man in his ſavage ſtate, was much abridged, and their caziques had aſſumed extenſive authority.

Cauſes of thoſe irregular appearances.

IT is not eaſy to point out the circumſtances, or to diſcover the cauſes which contributed to introduce and eſtabliſh among each of thoſe people a form of government ſo different from that of the tribes around them, and ſo repugnant to the genius of rude nations. If the perſons who had an opportunity of obſerving them, in their original ſtate, had been more attentive and more diſcern-

* Herrera, dec. 6. lib. i. c. 2. lib. v. c. 56. Piedrahita, c 5. p. 25, &c. Gomara Hiſt. c. 72.

ing,

ing, we might have received information from them ſufficient to guide us in this inquiry. If the tranſactions of people, unacquainted with the uſe of letters, were not involved in impenetrable obſcurity, we might have derived ſome information from that ſource. But as nothing ſatisfactory can be gathered, either from the accounts of the Spaniards, or from their own traditions, we muſt have recourſe to conjectures, in order to explain the irregular appearances in the political ſtate of the people whom I have mentioned. As all thoſe tribes which had loſt their native liberty and independence were ſeated in the Torrid Zone, or in countries approaching to it, the climate may be ſuppoſed to have had ſome influence in forming their minds to that ſervitude, which ſeems to be the deſtiny of man in thoſe regions of the globe. But though the influence of climate, more powerful than that of any other natural cauſe, is not to be overlooked; that alone cannot be admitted as a ſolution of the point in queſtion. The operations of men are ſo complex, that we muſt not attribute the form which they aſſume, to the force of a ſingle principle or cauſe. Although deſpotiſm be confined in America to the Torrid Zone, and to the warm regions bordering upon it, I have already obſerved that theſe countries contain various tribes, ſome of which poſſeſs an high degree of freedom, and others are altogether unacquainted with the reſtraints of government. The indolence and timidity peculiar to the inhabitants of the iſlands, rendered them ſo incapable of the ſentiments or efforts neceſſary for maintaining independence, that there is no occaſion to ſearch for any other cauſe of their tame ſubmiſſion to the will of a ſuperior. The ſubjection of the Natchez, and of the people of Bogota, ſeems to have been the conſequence

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ſequence of a difference in their ſtate from that of the other Americans. They were ſettled nations, reſiding conſtantly in one place. Hunting was not the chief occupation of the former, and the latter ſeem hardly to have truſted to it for any part of their ſubſiſtence. Both had made ſuch progreſs in agriculture and arts, that the idea of property was introduced in ſome degree in the one community, and fully eſtabliſhed in the other. Among people in this ſtate, avarice and ambition have acquired objects, and have begun to exert their power; views of intereſt allure the ſelfiſh; the deſire of pre-eminence excites the enterpriſing; dominion is courted by both; and paſſions unknown to man in his ſavage ſtate prompt the intereſted and ambitious to encroach on the rights of their fellow-citizens. Motives, with which rude nations are equally unacquainted, induce the people to ſubmit tamely to the uſurped authority of their ſuperiors. But even among nations in this ſtate, the ſpirit of ſubjects could not have been rendered ſo obſequious, or the power of rulers ſo unbounded, without the intervention of ſuperſtition. By its fatal influence, the human mind, in every ſtage of its progreſs, is depreſſed, and its native vigour and independence ſubdued. Whoever can acquire the direction of this formidable engine, is ſecure of dominion over his ſpecies. Unfortunately for the people whoſe inſtitutions are the ſubject of inquiry, this power was in the hands of their chiefs. The caziques of the iſles could put what reſponſes they pleaſed into the mouths of their *Cemis* or gods; and it was by their interpoſition, and in their name, that they impoſed any tribute or burden on their people *. The great chief of the Natchez was the principal miniſter as well as the repreſentative of the Sun, their deity.

* Herrera, dec. 1. lib. iii. c. 3.

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The reſpect which the people of Bogota paid to their monarchs, was inſpired by religion, and the heir apparent of the kingdom was educated in the innermoſt receſs of their principal temple, under ſuch auſtere diſcipline, and with ſuch peculiar rights, as tended to fill his ſubjects with high ſentiments concerning the ſanctity of his character, and the dignity of his ſtation *. Thus ſuperſtition, which, in the rudeſt period of ſociety, is either altogether unknown, or waſtes its force in childiſh unmeaning practices, had acquired ſuch an aſcendant over thoſe people of America, who had made ſome little progreſs towards refinement, that it became the cheif inſtrument of bending their minds to an untimely ſervitude, and ſubjected them, in the beginning of their political career, to a deſpotiſm hardly leſs rigorous, than that which awaits nations in the laſt ſtage of their corruption and decline.

Their art of war.

V. AFTER examining the political inſtitutions of the rude nations in America, the next object of attention is their art of war, or their proviſion for public ſecurity and defence. The ſmall tribes diſperſed over America are not only independent and unconnected, but engaged in perpetual hoſtilities with one and another †. Though ſtrangers to the idea of ſeparate property veſted in any individual, the rudeſt of the American nations are well acquainted with the rights of each community to its own domains. This right they hold to be perfect and excluſive, entitling the poſſeſſor to oppoſe the encroachment of neighbouring tribes. As it is of the utmoſt conſequence to prevent them from deſtroying or diſturbing the game in their hunting grounds, they guard this national property with a jealous attention. But as their territories are ex-

* Piedrahita, p. 27.

† Ribas Hiſt. de los triump. p. 9.

tenſive,

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tenſive, and the boundaries of them not exactly aſcertained, innumerable ſubjects of diſpute ariſe, which ſeldom terminate without bloodſhed. Even in this ſimple and primitive ſtate of ſociety, intereſt is a ſource of diſcord, and often prompts ſavage tribes to take arms, in order to repel or puniſh ſuch as encroach on the foreſts or plains, to which they truſt for ſubſiſtence.

Their motives for engaging in war.

But intereſt is not either the moſt frequent or the moſt powerful motive of the inceſſant hoſtilities among rude nations. Theſe muſt be imputed to the paſſion of revenge, which rages with ſuch violence in the breaſt of ſavages, that eagerneſs to gratify it may be conſidered as the diſtinguiſhing characteriſtic of men in their uncivilized ſtate. Circumſtances of powerful influence, both in the interior government of rude tribes, and in their external operations againſt foreign enemies, concur in cheriſhing and adding ſtrength to a paſſion fatal to the general tranquillity. When the right of addreſſing his own wrongs is left in the hands of every individual, injuries are felt with exquiſite ſenſibility, and vengeance exerciſed with unrelenting rancour. No time can obliterate the memory of an offence, and it is ſeldom that it can be expiated but by the blood of the offender. In carrying on their public wars, ſavage nations are influenced by the ſame ideas, and animated with the ſame ſpirit, as in proſecuting private vengeance. In ſmall communities, every man is touched with the injury or affront offered to the body of which he is a member, as if it were a perſonal attack upon his own honour or ſafety. The deſire of revenge is communicated from breaſt to breaſt, and ſoon kindles into rage. As feeble ſocieties can take the field only in ſmall parties, each warrior is conſcious of the importance of his own arm, and feels that to it is committed a conſiderable portion

From the ſpirit of vengeance.

of

of the public vengeance. War, which between extenſive kingdoms is carried on with little animoſity, is proſecuted by ſmall tribes with all the rancour of a private quarrel. The reſentment of nations is as implacable as that of individuals. It may be diſſembled or ſuppreſſed, but is never extinguiſhed; and often, when leaſt expected or dreaded, it burſts out with redoubled fury *. When poliſhed nations have obtained the glory of victory, or have acquired an addition of territory, they may terminate a war with honour. But ſavages are not ſatisfied until they extirpate the community, which is the object of their rage. They fight not to conquer, but to deſtroy. If they engage in hoſtilities, it is with the reſolution never to ſee the face of the enemy in peace, but to proſecute the quarrel with immortal enmity †. The deſire of vengeance is the firſt, and almoſt the only principle, which a ſavage inſtils into the minds of his children ‡. This grows up with him as he advances in life; and as his attention is directed to few objects, it acquires a degree of force unknown among men whoſe paſſions are diſſipated and weakened by the variety of their occupations and purſuits. The deſire of vengeance, which takes poſſeſſion of the heart of ſavages, reſembles the inſtinctive rage of an animal, rather than the paſſion of a man. It turns, with undiſcerning fury, even againſt inanimate objects. If hurt accidentally by a ſtone, they often ſeize it in a tranſport of anger, and endeavour to wreak their vengeance upon it §. If ſtruck

Hence the ferocity of their wars,

* Boucher Hiſt. Nat. de N. France, p. 93. Charlev. Hiſt. de N. France, iii. 215, 251. Lery ap De Bry, iii. 204. Creux. Hiſt. Canad. p. 72. Lozano Deſcr. del Gran Chaco, 95. Hennep. Moeurs des Sauv. 40. † Charlev. Hiſt. N. Fr. iii. 251. Colden, i. 108. ii. 126. Barrere, p. 170, 173.

‡ Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 326. Lery ap De Bry, iii. 236. Lozano Hiſt. de Parag. i. 144. § Lery ap De Bry, iii. 190.

with

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with an arrow in battle, they will tear it from the wound, break and bite it with their teeth, and daſh it on the ground *. With reſpect to their enemies, the rage of vengeance knows no bounds. When under the dominion of this paſſion, man becomes the moſt cruel of all animals. He neither pities, nor forgives, nor ſpares.

THE force of this paſſion is ſo well underſtood by the Americans themſelves, that they always apply to it, in order to excite their people to take arms. If the elders of any tribe attempt to rouze their youth from ſloth, if a chief wiſhes to allure a band of warriors to follow him in invading an enemy's country, the moſt perſuaſive topics of their martial eloquence are drawn from revenge. "The bones of our countrymen," ſay they, "lie uncovered; their bloody bed has not been waſhed clean. Their ſpirits cry againſt us; they muſt be appeaſed. Let us go and devour the people by whom they were ſlain. Sit no longer inactive upon your mats; lift the hatchet, conſole the ſpirits of the dead, and tell them that they ſhall be avenged †."

and their perpetuity.

ANIMATED with ſuch exhortations, the youth ſnatch their arms in a tranſport of fury, raiſe the ſong of war, and burn with impatience to embrue their hands in the blood of their enemies. Private chiefs often aſſemble ſmall parties, and invade a hoſtile tribe, without conſulting the rulers of the community. A ſingle warrior, prompted by caprice or revenge, will take the field alone, and march ſeveral hundred miles, to ſurpriſe and cut off a ſtraggling enemy ‡. The exploits of a noted

* Lery ap De Bry, iii. 208. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. vi. c. 8.

† Charlev. Hiſt. N. Fr. iii. 216, 217. Lery ap De Bry, iii. 204. ‡ See NOTE LXIII.

warrior,

warrior, in ſuch ſolitary excurſions, often form the chief part of the hiſtory of an American campaign *; and their elders connive at ſuch irregular ſallies, as they tend to cheriſh a martial ſpirit, and accuſtom their people to enterpriſe and danger †. But when a war is national, and undertaken by public authority, the deliberations are formal and ſlow. The elders aſſemble, they deliver their opinions in ſolemn ſpeeches, they weigh with maturity the nature of the enterpriſe, and balance its beneficial or diſadvantageous conſequences with no inconſiderable portion of political diſcernment and ſagacity. Their prieſts and ſoothſayers are conſulted, and ſometimes they aſk the advice even of their women ‡. If the determination be for war, they prepare for it with much ceremony. A leader offers to conduct the expedition, and is accepted. But no man is conſtrained to follow him; the reſolution of the community to commence hoſtilities impoſes no obligation upon any member to take part in the war. Each individual is ſtill maſter of his own conduct, and his engagement in the ſervice is perfectly voluntary §.

Mode of carrying on war.

THE maxims by which they regulate their military operations, though extremely different from thoſe which take place among more civilized and populous nations, are well ſuited to their own political ſtate, and the nature of the country in which they act. They never take the field in numerous bodies, as it would require a greater effort of foreſight and induſtry, than is uſual among ſavages, to provide for their ſubſiſtence, during a march of ſome hundred miles through dreary foreſts, or

* See NOTE LXIV. † Boſſu, i. 140. Lery ap De Bry, 215. Hennepin Mœurs des Sauv. 41. Lafitau, ii. 169. ‡ Charlev. Hiſt. N. Fr. iii. 215. 268. Biet, 367, 380. § Charlev. Hiſt. N. Fr. 217, 218.

BOOK IV. during a long voyage upon their lakes and rivers. Their armies are not encumbered with baggage or military ſtores. Each warrior, beſides his arms, carries a mat and a ſmall bag of pounded maize, and with theſe is completely equipped for any ſervice. While at a diſtance from the enemies frontier, they diſperſe through the woods and ſupport themſelves with the game which they kill, or the fiſh which they catch. As they approach nearer to the territories of the nation, which they intend to attack, they collect their troops, and advance with greater caution. Even then they proceed wholly by ſtratagem and ambuſcade. They place not their glory in attacking their enemies with open force. To ſurpriſe and deſtroy is the greateſt merit of a commander, and the higheſt pride of his followers. War and hunting are their only occupations, and they conduct both with the ſame ſpirit and the ſame arts. They follow the track of their enemies through the foreſt. They endeavour to diſcover their haunts, they lurk in ſome thicket near to theſe, and with the patience of a ſportſman lying in wait for game, will continue in their ſtation day after day, until they can ruſh upon their prey when moſt ſecure, and leaſt able to reſiſt them. If they meet no ſtraggling party of the enemy, they advance towards their villages, but with ſuch ſolicitude to conceal their approach, that they often creep on their hands and feet through the woods, and paint their ſkins of the ſame colour with the withered leaves, in order to avoid detection *. If ſo fortunate as to remain unobſerved, they ſet on fire their huts in the dead of night, and maſſacre the inhabitants, as they fly naked and defenceleſs from the flames. If they hope to effect a retreat without being purſued, they carry off ſome priſoners,

* Charlev. Hiſt. N. Fr. iii. 237, 238. Hennep. Mœurs des Sauv. p. 59.

whom

whom they reſerve for a more dreadful fate. But if, notwithſtanding all their addreſs and precautions they find that their motions are diſcovered, that the enemy has taken the alarm, and is prepared to oppoſe them, they uſually deem it moſt prudent to retire. They regard it as extreme folly to meet an enemy who is on his guard, upon equal terms, or to give battle in an open field. The moſt diſtinguiſhed ſucceſs is a diſgrace to a leader, if purchaſed with any conſiderable loſs of his followers *; and they never boaſt of a victory if ſtained with the blood of their own countrymen †. To fall in battle, inſtead of being reckoned an honourable death, is a misfortune which ſubjects the memory of a warrior to the imputation of raſhneſs or imprudence ‡.

Not owing to any defect of courage.

THIS ſyſtem of war was univerſal in America, and the ſmall uncivilized tribes, diſperſed through all its different regions and climates, diſplay more craft than boldneſs in carrying on their hoſtilities. Struck with this conduct, ſo oppoſite to the ideas and maxims of Europeans, ſeveral authors contend that it flows from a feeble and daſtardly ſpirit peculiar to the Americans, which is incapable of any generous or manly exertion §. But when we reflect that many of theſe tribes, on occaſions which call for extraordinary efforts, not only defend themſelves with obſtinate reſolution, but attack their enemies with the moſt daring courage, and that they poſſeſs fortitude of mind ſuperior to the ſenſe of danger or the fear of death, we muſt aſcribe their habitual caution to ſome other cauſe than conſtitutional timidity ‖. The number of men in each tribe

* See NOTE LXV. † Charlev. Hiſt. N. Fr. iii. 238. 307. Biet. 381. Lafitau Mœurs des Sauv. ii. 248.

‡ Charlev. iii. 376. See NOTE LXVI. § Recherches Philoſ. ſur les Americ. i, 115. Voyage de March. iv. 410. ‖ Lafitau Mœurs de Sauv. ii. 248, 249. Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 307.

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is so small, the difficulty of rearing new members, amidst the hardships and dangers of savage life, so great, that the life of a citizen is extremely precious, and the preservation of it becomes a capital object in their policy. Had the point of honour been the same among the feeble American tribes, as among the powerful nations of Europe, had they been taught, in contempt of danger and death, to court fame or victory, they must have been ruined by maxims, so ill adapted to their condition. But wherever their communties are more populous, so that they can act with considerable force, and can sustain the loss of several of their members, without being sensibly weakened, the military operations of the Americans more nearly resemble those of other nations. The Brasilians, as well as the tribes situated on the banks of the river de la Plata, often take the field in such numerous bodies, as deserve the name of armies *. They defy their enemies to the combat, engage in regular battles, and maintain the conflict with that desperate ferocity, which is natural to men, who have no idea of war but that of exterminating their enemies, and who never give or take quarter †. In the powerful empires of Mexico and Peru, great armies were assembled, frequent battles were fought, and the theory as well as practice of war were different from what took place in those petty societies which assume the name of nations.

Incapable of order or discipline.

But though vigilance and attention are the qualities chiefly requisite, where the object of war is to deceive and to surprise; and though the Americans, when acting singly, display an amazing degree of address in concealing their own motions, and discovering those of an enemy, yet it is remarkable

* Fabri Veriss. Descrip. Indiæ ap de Bry, vii. p. 42.
† See NOTE LXVII.

that,

that, when they take the field in parties, they can ſeldom be brought to obſerve the precautions moſt eſſential to their own ſecurity. Such is the difficulty of accuſtoming ſavages to ſubordination, or to act in concert; ſuch is their impatience under reſtraint, and ſuch is their caprice and preſumption, that it is rarely they can be brought to conform themſelves to the counſels and directions of their leaders. They never ſtation centinels around the place where they reſt at night, and after marching ſome hundred miles to ſurpriſe an enemy, are often ſurpriſed themſelves, and cut off, while ſunk in as profound ſleep as if they were not within reach of danger *.

If notwithſtanding this negligence and ſecurity, which often fruſtrate their moſt artful ſchemes, they catch the enemy unprepared, they ruſh upon them with the utmoſt ferocity, and tearing off the ſcalps of all thoſe who fall victims to their rage †, they carry home thoſe ſtrange trophies in triumph. Theſe they preſerve as monuments, not only of their own proweſs, but of the vengeance which their arm has inflicted upon the people who were objects of public reſentment ‡. They are ſtilll more ſolicitous to ſeize priſoners. During their retreat, if they hope to affect it unmoleſted, theſe are commonly exempt from any inſult, and treated with ſome degree of humanity, though guarded with the moſt ſtrict attention.

Treatment of priſoners.

But after this temporary ſuſpenſion, their rage rekindles with new fury. As ſoon as they approach their own frontiers, ſome of their number are diſpatched to inform their countrymen with reſpect to the ſucceſs of the expedition. Then the priſoners begin to feel the wretchedneſs of their

* Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 236, 237. Lettr. Edif. 17. 308. 20. 130. Lafit. Mœurs, ii. 247. Lahontan, ii. 176.

† See NOTE LXVIII. ‡ Lafitau Mœurs, ii. 256.

condition.

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Their indifference concerning their fate.

WHILE their lot is in ſuſpenſe, the priſoners themſelves appear altogether unconcerned about

* Lahontan, ii. 184. † Charlev. Hiſt. N. Fr. ii. 241. Lafitau Mœurs, ii. 264.

what

what may befal them. They talk, they eat, they ſleep, as if they were perfectly at eaſe, and no danger impending. When the fatal ſentence is intimated to them, they receive it with an unaltered countenance, raiſe their death-ſong, and prepare to ſuffer like men. Their conquerors aſſemble as to a ſolemn feſtival, reſolved to put their courage to the utmoſt proof. A ſcene enſues, the bare deſcription of which is enough to chill the heart with horror, wherever men have been accuſtomed, by milder inſtitutions, to reſpect their ſpecies, and to melt into tenderneſs at the ſight of human ſufferings. The priſoners are tied naked to a ſtake, but ſo as to be at liberty to move around it. All who are preſent, men, women, and children, ruſh upon them like furies. Every ſpecies of torture is applied that the rancour of revenge can invent. Some burn their limbs with red-hot irons, ſome mangle their bodies with knives, others tear their fleſh from their bones, pluck out their nails by the roots, and rend and twiſt their ſinews. They vie with one another in refinements of torture. Nothing ſets bounds to their rage, but the dread of abridging the duration of their vengeance by haſtening the death of the ſufferers: and ſuch is their cruel ingenuity in tormenting, that by avoiding induſtriouſly to hurt any vital part, they often prolong this ſcene of anguiſh for ſeveral days. In ſpite of all that they ſuffer, the victims continue to chant their death-ſong with a firm voice, they boaſt of their own exploits, they inſult their tormentors for their want of ſkill in avenging their friends and relations, they warn them of the vengeance which awaits them, on account of their death, and excite their ferocity by the moſt provoking reproaches and threats. To diſplay undaunted fortitude in ſuch dreadful ſituations is the nobleſt triumph of a warrior. To avoid the trial by a voluntary death, or to ſhrink under it, is deemed infamous and cowardly.

and fortitude under torture.

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cowardly. If any one betray ſymptoms of timidity, they often diſpatch him at once with contempt, as unworthy of being treated like a man *. Animated with thoſe ideas, they endure without a groan, what it ſeems almoſt impoſſible that human nature ſhould ſuſtain. They appear to be not only inſenſible of pain, but to court it. "Forbear, ſaid an aged chief of the Iroquois, when his inſults had provoked one of his tormentors to wound him with a knife, forbear theſe ſtabs of your knife, and rather let me die by fire, that thoſe dogs, your allies, from beyond the ſea, may learn by my example to ſuffer like men †." This magnanimity, of which there are frequent inſtances among the American warriors, inſtead of exciting admiration, or calling forth ſympathy, exaſperates the fierce ſpirits of their torturers to freſh acts of cruelty ‡. Weary at length of contending with men, whoſe conſtancy of mind they cannot vanquiſh, ſome chief in a rage, puts a period to their ſufferings, by diſpatching them with his dagger or club §.

Sometimes eat their priſoners.

THIS barbarous ſcene is often ſucceeded by one no leſs ſhocking. As it is impoſſible to appeaſe the fell ſpirit of revenge which rages in the heart of a ſavage, this frequently prompts the Americans to devour thoſe unhappy perſons, who have been the victims of their cruelty. In the ancient world, tradition has preſerved the memory of barbarous nations of canibals, who fed on human fleſh. But in every part of the New World, there were people to whom this cuſtom was familiar.

* De la Potherie, ii. 237. iii. 48. † Colden. Hiſt. of Five Nations, i. 200. ‡ Voyages de Lahont. i 236. § Charlev. Hiſt N. Fr. iii. 243, &c. 385. Laſiau, Mœurs ii. 265. Creuxij, Hiſt. Canad. p. 73. Hennep. Mœurs des Sauv. p. 64, &c. Lahont i. 233, &c. Tertre, ii. 405. De la Potherie, ii. 22, &c.

liar. It prevailed in the ſouthern continent *, in ſeveral of the iſlands †, and in various diſtricts of North-America ‡. Even in thoſe parts, where circumſtances, with which we are unacquainted, had in a great meaſure aboliſhed this practice, it ſeems to have been ſo well known, that it is incorporated into the idiom of their language. Among the Iroquois, the phraſe by which they expreſs their reſolution of making war againſt an enemy is, "Let us go and eat that nation." If they ſolicit the aid of a neighbouring tribe, they invite it to "eat broth made of the fleſh of their enemies §." Nor, was the practice peculiar to rude unpoliſhed tribes, the principle from which it took riſe, is ſo deeply rooted in the minds of the Americans, that it ſubſiſted in Mexico, one of the civilized empires in the New World, and relics of it may be diſcovered among the more mild inhabitants of Peru. It was not ſcarcity of food, as ſome authors imagine, and the importunate cravings of hunger, that forced the Americans to thoſe horrid repaſts on their fellow-creatures. Human fleſh was never uſed as common food in any country, and the various relations concerning people, who reckoned it among the ſtated means of ſubſiſtence, flow from the credulity and miſtakes of travellers. The rancour of revenge firſt prompted men to this barbarous action ‖. The fierceſt tribes devoured none but priſoners taken in war, or ſuch as they regarded as enemies ¶. Women and children

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* Stadius ap de Bry, iii. 123. Lery, ibid. 210. Biet, 384. Lettr. Edif. 23. 341. Piſo, 8. Condam. 84. 97. Ribas, Hiſt. de los Triumph. 473. † Life of Columb. 529. Mart. Dec. p. 18. Tertre, ii. 405. ‡ Dumont, Mem. i. 254. Charlev. Hiſt. N. Fr. i. 259. ii. 14. iii. 21. De la Potherie, iii. 50. § Charlev. Hiſt. N. Fr. iii. 208, 209. Lettr. Edif. 23. p. 277. De la Potherie, ii. 298. See NOTE LXIX. ‖ Biet, 383. Blanco, Converſion de Piritu, p. 28. Bancroft, Nat. Hiſt. of Guiana, p. 259, &c.

¶ See NOTE LXX.

who

BOOK IV. who were not the objects of enmity, if not cut off in the fury of their firſt inroad into an hoſtile country, ſeldom ſuffered by the deliberate effects of their revenge *.

THE people of South America gratify their revenge in a manner ſomewhat different, but with no leſs unrelenting rancour. Their priſoners, after meeting at their firſt entrance with the ſame rough reception as among the North-Americans †, are not only exempt from injury, but treated with the greateſt kindneſs. They are feaſted and careſſed, and ſome beautiful young women are appointed to attend and ſolace them. It is not eaſy to account for this part of their conduct, unleſs we impute it to a refinement in cruelty. For, while they ſeem ſtudious to attach their priſoners to life, by ſupplying them with every enjoyment that can render it agreeable, their doom is irrevocably fixed. On a day appointed, the victorious tribe aſſembles, the captive is brought forth with great ſolemnity, he views the preparations for the ſacrifice with as much indifference, as if he himſelf were not the victim, and meeting his fate with undaunted firmneſs, is diſpatched with a ſingle blow. The moment he falls, the women ſeize the body, and dreſs it for the feaſt. They beſmear their children with the blood, in order to kindle in their boſoms a hatred of their enemies, which is never extinguiſhed, and all join in feeding upon the fleſh with amazing greedineſs and exultation ‡. To devour the body of a ſlaughtered enemy, they deem the moſt complete and exquiſite gratification of revenge. Wherever this practice prevails,

* Biet, 382. Bandini, Vita di Americo, 84. Tertre, 405. Fermin, Deſcrip. de Surin. i. 54. † Stadius ap de Bry, iii. p. 40. 123. ‡ Stadius ap de Bry, iii. 128, &c. Lery, ibid. 210.

captives

captives never eſcape death, but they are not tortured with the ſame cruelty as among the tribes which are leſs accuſtomed to ſuch horrid feaſts *. BOOK IV.

As the conſtancy of every American warrior may be put to ſuch ſevere proof, the great object of education and diſcipline in the New World is to form the mind to ſuſtain it. When nations carry on war with open force, defy their enemies to the combat, and vanquiſh them by the ſuperiority of their ſkill or courage, ſoldiers are trained to be active, vigorous, and enterpriſing. But in America, where the genius and maxims of war are extremely different, paſſive fortitude is the quality in higheſt eſtimation. Accordingly, it is early the ſtudy of the Americans to acquire a talent, which will enable them to behave like men, when their reſolution ſhall be put to the proof. As the youth of other nations exerciſe themſelves in feats of activity and force, thoſe of America vie with one another in exhibitions of their patience under ſufferings. They harden their nerves by thoſe voluntary trials, and gradually accuſtom themſelves to endure the ſharpeſt pain, without complaining. A boy and girl will bind their naked arms together, and place a burning coal between them, in order to try who firſt diſcovers ſuch impatience as to ſhake it off †. All the trials, cuſtomary in America, when a youth is admitted into the claſs of warriors, or when a warrior is promoted to the dignity of captain or chief, are accommodated to this idea of manlineſs. They are not diſplays of valour, but of patience; they are not exhibitions of their ability to offend, but of their capacity to ſuffer. Among the tribes on the banks of the Orinoco, if a warrior aſpires to the rank of cap-

* See NOTE LXXI. † Charlev. Hiſt. N. Fr. iii. 307.

tain,

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tain, his probation begins with a long faſt, more rigid than any ever obſerved by the moſt abſtemious hermit. At the cloſe of this, the chiefs aſſemble, each gives him three laſhes with a large whip, applied ſo vigorouſly, that his body is almoſt flayed, and if he betrays the leaſt ſymptom of impatience or even ſenſibility, he is diſgraced for ever, and rejected as unworthy of the honour. After ſome interval, the conſtancy of the candidate is proved by a more excruciating trial. He is laid in a hammoc with his hands bound faſt, an innumerable multitude of venomous ants, whoſe bite occaſions exquiſite pain, and produces a violent inflammation, are thrown upon him. The judges of his merit ſtand around the hammoc, and, while theſe cruel inſects faſten upon the moſt ſenſible parts of his body, a ſigh, a groan, an involuntary motion expreſſive of what he ſuffers, would exclude him from the dignity which he is ambitious to obtain. Even after this evidence of his fortitude, it is not deemed to be completely aſcertained, but muſt ſtand another teſt more dreadful than any he has hitherto undergone. He is again ſuſpended in his hammoc, and covered with leaves of the palmetto. A fire of ſtinking herbs is kindled underneath, ſo as he may feel its heat, and be involved in ſmoke. Though ſcorched and almoſt ſuffocated, he muſt continue to endure with the ſame patient inſenſibility. Many periſh in this rude eſſay of their firmneſs and courage, but ſuch as go through it with applauſe, receive the enſigns of their new dignity with much ſolemnity, and are ever after regarded as leaders of approved reſolution, whoſe behaviour, in the moſt trying ſituations, will do honour to their country *. In North-

* Gumilla, ii. 286, &c. Biet, 376, &c.

America,

America, the previous trial of a warrior is neither ſo formal, nor ſo ſevere. Though even there, before a youth is permitted to bear arms, his patience and fortitude are proved by blows, by fire, and by inſults, more intolerable to a haughty ſpirit than both *.

THE amzing ſteadineſs with which the Americans endure the moſt exquiſite torments, has enduced ſome authors to ſuppoſe that, from the peculiar feebleneſs of their frame, their ſenſibility is not ſo acute as that of other people; as women, and perſons of a relaxed habit, are obſerved to be leſs affected with pain than robuſt men, whoſe nerves are more firmly braced. But the conſtitution of the Americans is not ſo different, in its texture, from that of the reſt of the human ſpecies, as to account for this diverſity in their behaviour. It flows from a principle of honour, inſtilled early and cultivated with ſuch care, as to inſpire man in his rudeſt ſtate with an heroic magnanimity, to which philoſophy hath endeavoured, in vain, to form him, when more highly improved and poliſhed. This invincible conſtancy he has been taught to conſider as the chief diſtinction of man, and the higheſt attainment of a warrior. The ideas which influence his conduct, and the paſſions which take poſſeſſion of his heart, are few. They operate of courſe with more deciſive effect, than when the mind is crowded with a multiplicity of objects, or diſtracted by the variety of its purſuits; and when every motive that operates with force on the mind of a ſavage, prompts them to ſuffer with dignity, they will bear what might ſeem to be impoſſible for human patience to ſuſtain. But wherever the

* Charlev. Hiſt. N. Fr. iii. 219.

fortitude

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fortitude of the Americans is not roused to exertion by their ideas of honour, their feelings of pain are the same with those of the rest of mankind *. Nor is that patience under sufferings for which the Americans have been so justly celebrated an universal attainment. The constancy of many of the victims is overcome by the agonies of torture. Their weakness and lamentations complete the triumph of their enemies, and reflect disgrace upon their country. †

Wasted by their perpetual wars.

THE perpetual hostilities carried on among the American tribes are productive of very fatal effects. As their imperfect industry does not supply them with any superfluous store of provisions, even in seasons of tranquillity, when the irruption of an enemy desolates their cultivated lands, or disturbs them in their hunting excursions, such a calamity reduces a community, naturally unprovident and destitute of resources, to extreme want. All the people of the district that is invaded, are frequently forced to take refuge in woods or mountains, which can afford them no subsistence, and where many of them perish. Notwithstanding their excessive caution in conducting their military operations, and the solicitude of every leader to preserve the lives of his followers, as they seldom enjoy any intervals of peace, the loss of men among the Americans is considerable in proportion to the degree of population. Thus famine and the sword combine in thinning their numbers. All their tribes are feeble, and many which were once powerful have gradually wasted away and at last disap-

* See NOTE LXXII.

† Charlev. Hist. N. Fr. iii. 248. 385. De la Potherie, iii. 48.

peared.

peared. Nothing now remains of ſeveral nations, which were once conſiderable, but the name. * BOOK IV.

SENSIBLE of this continual decay, there are tribes which endeavour to recruit their national force when exhauſted, by adopting priſoners taken in war, and by this expedient prevent their total extinction. The practice, however, is not univerſally received. Reſentment operates more powerfully among ſavages, than conſiderations of policy. Far the greater part of their captives was antiently ſacrificed to their vengeance, and it is only ſince their numbers began to decline faſt, that they have adopted milder maxims. But ſuch as they do naturalize, renounce for ever their native tribe, and aſſume the manners as well as paſſions of the people by whom they are adopted †, ſo entirely, that they often join them in their expeditions againſt their own countrymen. Such a ſudden tranſition, and ſo repugnant to one of the moſt powerful inſtincts implanted by nature, would appear ſtrange among any people; but, among the members of ſmall communities, where national enmity is violent and deep-rooted, it is more unaccountable. It ſeems however, to reſult naturally from the principles upon which war is carried on in America. When nations aim at exterminating their enemies, no exchange of priſoners can ever take place. From the moment one is made a priſoner, his country and his friends conſider him as dead §. He has incurred indelible diſgrace by ſuffering himſelf to be ſurpriſed or to be taken by an enemy; and were he to return home, after ſuch a

Recruit their numbers by adopting priſoners.

* Charlev. Hiſt. N. Fr. iii. 202, 203. 429. Gumilla, ii. 227, &c.

† Charlev. Hiſt. N. Fr. iii. 245, &c. Lafit. ii. 308.

§ See NOTE LXXIII.

ſtain

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ſtain upon his honour, his neareſt relations would not receive, or even acknowledge that they knew him *. Some tribes were ſtill more rigid, and if a priſoner returned, the infamy which he had brought on his country was expiated, by putting him inſtantly to death †. As the unfortunate captive is thus an out-caſt from his own country, and the ties which bound him to it are irreparably broken, he feels leſs reluctance in forming a new connection with people, who, as an evidence of their friendly ſentiments, not only deliver him from a cruel death, but offer to admit him to all the rights of a fellow-citizen. The perfect ſimilarity of manners among ſavage nations facilitates and completes the union, and induces a captive to transfer not only his allegiance, but his affection, to the community into the boſom of which he is received.

Their inferiority in war to poliſhed nations.

But though war be the chief occupation of men in their rude ſtate, and to excel in it, their higheſt diſtinction and pride, their inferiority is always manifeſt when they engage in competition with poliſhed nations. Deſtitute of that foreſight which diſcerns and provides for remote events, ſtrangers to the union and mutual confidence requiſite in forming any extenſive plan of operations, and incapable of the ſubordination no leſs requiſite in carrying into execution ſuch plans, ſavage nations may aſtoniſh a diſciplined enemy by their valour, but ſeldom prove formidable to him by their conduct, and whenever the conteſt is of long continuance, muſt yield to ſuperior art §. The empires of Peru and Mexico, though their progreſs in civilization, when meaſured by the European or

* Lahont. ii. 185. 186. † Herrera, dec. 3. lib. iv. c. 16. p. 173. § See NOTE LXXIV.

Aſiatic

Asiatic standards, was inconsiderable, acquired such an ascendency over the rude tribes around them, that they subjected most of them with great facility to their power. When the people of Europe over-ran the various provinces of America, this superiority was still more conspicuous. Neither the courage nor number of the natives could repel a handful of invaders. The alienation and enmity, prevalent among barbarians, prevented them from uniting in any common scheme of defence, and while each tribe fought separately, all were subdued.

Their arts.

VI. The arts of rude nations unacquainted with the use of metals, hardly merit any attention on their own account, but are worthy of some notice, as far as they serve to display the genius and manners of a people. The first distress a savage must feel, will arise from the manner in which his body is affected, by the heat, or cold, or moisture of the climate under which he lives; and his first care will be, to provide some covering for his own defence. In the warmer and more mild climates of America, none of the rude tribes were clothed. To most of them Nature had not even suggested any idea of impropriety in being altogether uncovered *. As under a mild climate there was little need of any defence from the injuries of the air, and their extreme indolence shunned every species of labour to which it was not urged by absolute necessity, all the inhabitants of the isles, and a considerable part of the people on the continent, remained in this state of naked simplicity. Others were satisfied with some slight covering, such as decency required. But though naked, they were not unadorned. They dressed their hair in many different forms. They fastened bits of gold, or

Dress and ornaments.

* Lery Navigat. ap de Bry, iii. p. 164. Life of Columbus, c. 24. Venegas Hist. of Californ. p. 70.

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ſhells, or ſhining ſtones, in their ears, their noſes, and cheeks *. They ſtained their ſkins with a great variety of figures; and they ſpent much time, and ſubmitted to great pain, in ornamenting their perſons in this fantaſtic manner. Vanity, however, which finds endleſs occupation for its ingenuity and invention, in nations where dreſs has become a complex and intricate art, is circumſcribed within ſo narrow bounds, and confined to ſo few articles among naked ſavages, that they are not ſatisfied with thoſe ſimple decorations, and have a wonderful propenſity to alter the natural form of their bodies. This practice was univerſal among the rudeſt of the American tribes. Their operations for that purpoſe begin as ſoon as an infant is born. By compreſſing the bones of the ſkull, while ſtill ſoft and flexible, ſome flatten the crown of their heads; ſome ſqueeze them into the ſhape of a cone; others mould them as much as poſſible into a ſquare figure †; and they often endanger the lives of their poſterity by their violent and abſurd efforts to derange the plan of Nature, or to improve upon her deſigns. But in all their attempts either to adorn or to new-model their perſons, it ſeems to have been leſs the object of the Americans to pleaſe, or to appear beautiful, than to give an air of dignity and terror to their aſpect. Their attention to dreſs had more reference to war than to gallantry. The difference in rank and eſtimation between the two ſexes was ſo great, as extinguiſhed, in ſome meaſure, their ſolicitude to appear mutually amiable. The man deemed it beneath him to adorn his perſon, for the ſake of one on whom he was ac-

* Lery ap. de Bry. iii. 165. Lettr. Edifiantes, 20. 223.

† Oviedo Hiſt. lib. iii. c. 5. Ulloa, i. 329. Voyage de Labat. ii. 72. Charlevoix, iii. 323. Gumilla, i. 197, &c. Acugna Relat. de la Riv. des Amaz. ii. 83. Lawſon's Voy. to Carolina, p. 33.

cuſtomed

cuſtomed to look down as a ſlave. It was when the warrior had in view to enter the council of his nation, or take the field againſt its enemies, that he aſſumed his choiceſt ornaments, and decked his perſon with the niceſt care *. The decorations of the women were few and ſimple; whatever was precious or ſplendid was reſerved for the men. In ſeveral tribes the women were obliged to ſpend a conſiderable part of their time every day in adorning and painting their huſbands, and could beſtow little attention upon ornamenting themſelves. Among a race of men ſo haughty as to deſpiſe, or ſo cold as to neglect them, the women naturally became careleſs and ſlovenly, and the love of finery and ſhow, which has been deemed their favourite paſſion, was confined chiefly to the other ſex †. To deck his perſon was the diſtinction of a warrior, as well as one of his moſt ſerious occupations ‡. In one part of their dreſs, which, at firſt ſight, appears the moſt ſingular and capricious, the Americans have diſcovered conſiderable ſagacity in providing againſt the chief inconveniencies of their climate, which is often ſultry and moiſt to exceſs. All the the different tribes, which remain unclothed, are accuſtomed to anoint and rub their bodies with the greaſe of animals, with viſcous gums, and with oils of different kinds. By this they check that profuſe perſpiration, which, in the torrid zone, waſtes the vigour of the frame, and abridges the period of human life. By this too they provide a defence againſt the extreme moiſture during the rainy ſeaſon §. They likewiſe, at certain ſeaſons, temper paint of different colours with thoſe unctuous ſub-

* Wafer's Voyage, p. 142. Lery ap. de Bry, iii. 167. Charlev. Hiſt. N. Fran. iii. 216. 222. † Charlev. Hiſt. de la Nouv. France, iii. 278. 327. Lafitau, ii. 53. Kalm's Voyage, iii. 273. Lery ap. de Bry, iii. 169, 170. Purch. Pilgr. iv. 1287. Ribas Hiſt. de los triumph, &c. 472.

‡ See NOTE LXXV. § See NOTE LXXVI.

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ſtances, and bedaub themſelves plentifully with that compoſition. Sheathed with this impenetrable varniſh, their ſkins are not only protected from the penetrating heat of the ſun, but, as all the innumerable tribes of inſects have an antipathy to the ſmell or taſte of that mixture, they are delivered from their teazing perſecution, which, amidſt foreſts and marſhes, eſpecially in the warmer regions, muſt have been altogether intolerable in their ſtate of nakedneſs *.

Habitations.

THE next object to dreſs that will engage the attention of a ſavage, is to prepare ſome habitation that may afford him ſhelter by day and a retreat at night. Whatever is connected with his ideas of perſonal dignity, whatever bears any reference to his military character, the ſavage warrior deems an object of importance. Whatever relates only to peaceable and inactive life, he views with perfect indifference. Hence, though finically attentive to dreſs, he is little ſolicitous about the elegance or diſpoſition of his habitation. Savage nations far from that ſtate of improvement, in which the mode of living is conſidered as a mark of diſtinction, and unacquainted with thoſe wants, which require a variety of accommodation, regulate the conſtruction of their houſes according to their limited ideas of neceſſity. Some of the American tribes were ſo extremely rude, and had advanced ſo little beyond the primeval ſimplicity of nature, that they had no houſes at all. During the day, they take ſhelter from the ſcorching rays of the ſun under thick trees; at night they form a ſhed with their branches and leaves †. In the rainy ſeaſon they retire into covers, formed by the hand of nature, or hollowed out by their own induſtry ‡. Others who have no fixed abode, and roam through the foreſts in queſt of game,

* Labat, ii. 73. Gumilla, i. 190. 202. Bancroft Nat. Hiſt. of Guiana, 81, 280. † See NOTE LXXVII.

‡ Lettres Edif. v. 273. Venegas Hiſt. of Califor. i. 76. Lozano Deſcrip. del Gran Chaco, p. 55. Lettres Edif. ii. 176. Gumilla, i. 383. Brancroft Nat. Hiſt. of Guiana, 277.

ſojourn

ſojourn in temporary huts, which they erect with little labour, and abandon without any concern. The inhabitants of thoſe vaſt plains, which are deluged by the overflowing of the rivers during the heavy rains that fall periodically between the tropics, raiſe houſes upon piles faſtened in the ground, or place them among the boughs of trees, and are thus ſafe amidſt that wide extended inundation which ſurrounds them *. Such were the firſt eſſays of the rudeſt Americans towards providing themſelves with habitations. But even among tribes which were more improved, and whoſe reſidence was become altogether fixed, the ſtructure of their houſes was extremely mean and ſimple. They were wretched huts, ſometimes of an oblong, and ſometimes of a circular form, intended merely for ſhelter, with no view to elegance and little attention to conveniency. The doors were ſo low, that it was neceſſary to bend, or to creep on the hands and feet in order to enter them. They were without windows, and had a large hole in the middle of the roof, to convey out the ſmoke. To follow travellers in other minute circumſtances of their deſcription, is not not only beneath the dignity of hiſtory, but would be foreign to the object of my reſearches. One circumſtance merits attention, as it is ſingular, and illuſtrates the character of the people. Some of their houſes were ſo large as to contain accommodation for fourſcore or a hundred perſons. Theſe were built for the reception of different families, which dwelt together under the ſame roof †, and often around a common fire, without ſeparate apartments, or any kind of ſcreen or partition between the ſpaces which they reſpectively occupied. As ſoon as men have acquired diſtinct ideas of property; or when they are ſo much attached to their females, as to watch them with care and jealouſy;

* Gumilla, i. 225. Herrera, dec. i. lib. ix. c. 6. Oviedo Sommar, p. 53. C.

† See NOTE LXXVIII.

families

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families of courſe divide and ſettle in ſeparate houſes, where they can ſecure and guard whatever they wiſh to preſerve. This ſingular mode of habitation may therefore be conſidered not only as the effect of that community of goods which ſubſiſted among the ſeveral people in America, but as a proof of inattention and indifference towards their women. If they had not been accuſtomed to perfect equality, ſuch an arrangement could not have taken place. If their ſenſibility had been apt to have taken alarm, they would not have truſted the virtue of their women amidſt the temptations and opportunities of ſuch a promiſcuous intercourſe. At the ſame time, the perpetual concord, which reigns in habitations where ſo many families are crowded together, is ſurpriſing, and affords a ſtriking evidence that they muſt be people of either a very gentle, or of a very phlegmatic temper, who, in ſuch a ſituation, are unacquainted with animoſity, brawling, and diſcord. *

Their arms.

AFTER making ſome proviſion for his dreſs and habitation, a ſavage will perceive the neceſſity of preparing proper arms with which to aſſault or repel an enemy. This, accordingly has early exerciſed the ingenuity and invention of all rude nations. The firſt offenſive weapons were doubtleſs ſuch as chance preſented, and the firſt efforts of art to improve upon theſe, were extremely aukward and ſimple. Clubs made of ſome heavy wood, ſtakes hardened in the fire, lances whoſe heads were armed with flint or the bones of ſome animal, are weapons known to the rudeſt nations. All theſe, however, were of uſe only in cloſe encoun-

* Journ. de Grillet & Becha mel dans la Goyane, p. 65. Lafitau Mœurs, ii. 4. Torquem. Monarq. i. 247. Journal Hiſt. de Joutel, 217. Lery Hiſt. Brazil, ap. de Bry, iii. 238. Lozano. Deſcr. del Gran Chaco. 67.

ter,

ter. But men wiſhed to annoy their enemies while at a diſtance, and the bow and arrow is the moſt early invention for this purpoſe. This weapon is in the hands of people, whoſe advances in improvement are extremely inconſiderable, and is familiar to the inhabitants of every quarter of the globe. It is remarkable, however, that ſome tribes in America were ſo deſtitute of art and ingenuity, that they had not attained to the diſcovery of this ſimple invention *, and ſeem to have been unacquainted with the uſe of any miſſive weapon. The ſling, though in its conſtruction not more complex than the bow, and among many nations of equal antiquity, was little known to the People of North America †, or the iſlands, but appears to have been uſed by a few tribes in the ſouthern continent ‡. The people in ſome provinces of Chili, and thoſe of Patagonia, towards the ſouthern extremity of America, uſe a weapon peculiar to themſelves. They faſten ſtones about the ſize of a fiſt to each end of a leather thong of eight feet in length, and ſwinging theſe round their heads, throw them with ſuch dexterity that they ſeldom miſs the object at which they aim §.

Their domeſtic utenſils.

AMONG people who had hardly any occupation but war or hunting, the chief exertions of their invention ‖, as well as induſtry, were naturally directed towards theſe objects. With reſpect to every thing elſe, their wants and deſires were ſo limited, that their invention was not upon the ſtretch. As their food and habitations were perfectly ſimple, their domeſtic utenſils were few and rude. Some of the ſouthern tribes had diſcovered the art of forming veſſels of earthen ware, and baking them

* Piedrahita Conq. del Nuevo Reyno, 9, 12. † Naufr. de Alf. Nun Cabeca de vaca, c. x. p. 12. ‡ Piedrah. p. 16. See NOTE LXXIX. § Ovalle's Relation of Chili. Church. Collect. iii. 82. Falkner's Deſcrip. of Patagon. p. 130. ‖ See NOTE LXXX.

in

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Dreſſing their food.

in the ſun, ſo as they could endure the fire. In North America, they hollowed a piece of hard wood into the form of a kettle, and filling it with water, brought it to boil by throwing red-hot ſtones into it *. Theſe veſſels they uſed in preparing part of their proviſions; and this may be conſidered as a ſtep towards refinement and luxury, for men in their rudeſt ſtate were not acquainted with any method of dreſſing their victuals, but by roaſting them on the fire; and among ſeveral tribes in America, this is the only ſpecies of cookery yet known †. But the maſter-piece of art, among the ſavages of America, is the conſtruction of their canoes. An Eſkimaux, ſhut up in his boat of whale-bone, covered with the ſkins of ſeals, can brave that ſtormy ocean, on which the barrenneſs of his country compels him to depend for the chief part of his ſubſiſtence ‡. The people of Canada venture upon their rivers and lakes in boats made of the bark of trees, and ſo light that two men can carry them wherever ſhallows or cataracts obſtruct the navigation ||. In theſe frail veſſels they undertake and accompliſh long voyages §. The inhabitants of the iſles and of the ſouthern continent form their canoes by hollowing the trunk of a large tree, with infinite labour, and though in appearance extremely aukward and unwieldy, they paddle and ſteer them with ſuch dexterity, that Europeans well acquainted with all the improvements in the ſcience of navigation, have been aſtoniſhed at the rapidity of their motion, and the quickneſs of their evolutions. Their *pirogues*, or war-boats, are ſo large as to carry forty or fifty men; their

Conſtruction of their canoes.

* Charlev. Hiſt. of N. Fr. iii. 332. † See NOTE LXXXI. ‡ Ellis Voy. 133. || See NOTE LXXXII. § Lafitau Mœurs, &c. ii. 213.

canoes

canoes employed in fiſhing and in ſhort voyages are leſs capacious *. The form as well as materials of all theſe various ſpecies of veſſels is well adapted to the ſervice for which they are deſtined; and the more minutely they are examined, the mechaniſm of their ſtructure, as well as neatneſs of their fabric, will appear the more admirable.

Liſtleſſneſs with which they apply to labour.

But, in every attempt towards induſtry among the Americans, one ſtriking quality in their character is conſpicuous. They apply to work without ardour, carry it on with little activity, and, like children, are eaſily diverted from it. Even in operations which ſeem the moſt intereſting, and where the moſt powerful motives urge them to vigorous exertions, they labour with a languid liſtleſſneſs. Their work advances under their hand with ſuch ſlowneſs, that an eye-witneſs compares it to the imperceptible progreſs of vegetation †. They will ſpend ſo many years in forming a canoe, that it often begins to rot with age before they finiſh it. They will ſuffer one part of a roof to decay and periſh, before they complete the other ‡. The ſlighteſt manual operation conſumes a vaſt length of time, and what in poliſhed nations would hardly be an effort of induſtry, is among ſavages an arduous undertaking. This ſlowneſs of the Americans in executing works of every kind may be imputed to various cauſes. Among ſavages, who do not depend for ſubſiſtence upon the efforts of regular induſtry, time is of ſo little importance, that they ſet no value upon it; and provided they can finiſh a deſign, they never regard how long they are employed about it. The tools which they employ are ſo aukward and defective, that every work in which they engage muſt neceſſarily be tedious. The hand of the moſt induſtri-

* Labat Voyages, ii. 91, &c. 131. † Gumilla, ii. 297.
‡ Borde Relat. des Caraibes, p. 22.

ous

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ous and ſkilful artiſt, were it furniſhed with no better inſtrument than a ſtone hatchet, a ſhell, or the bone of ſome animal, could hardly perfect the moſt ſimple work. It is by length of labour, that he muſt endeavour to ſupply his defect of power. But, above all, the cold phlegmatic temper peculiar to the Americans renders their operations languid. It is almoſt impoſſible to rouze them from that habitual indolence in which they are ſunk; and unleſs when engaged in war or hunting, they ſeem incapable of exerting any vigorous effort. Their ardour of application is not ſo great as to call forth that inventive ſpirit which ſuggeſts expedients for facilitating and abridging labour. They will return to a taſk day after day, but all their methods of executing it are tedious and operoſe *. Even ſince the Europeans have communicated to them the knowledge of their inſtruments, and taught them to imitate their arts, the peculiar genius of the Americans is conſpicuous in all their attempts. They may be patient and aſſiduous in labour, they can copy with a ſervile and minute accuracy, but diſcover little invention, and no talents for diſpatch. In ſpite of inſtruction and example, the ſpirit of the race predominates; their motions are naturally tardy, and it is vain to urge them to quicken their pace. Among the Spaniards in America, *the work of an Indian* is a phraſe by which they deſcribe any thing, in the execution of which an immenſe time has been employed, and much labour waſted †.

Their religion.

VII. No circumſtance reſpecting rude nations has been the object of greater curioſity than their religious tenets and rites; and none, perhaps, has been ſo imperfectly underſtood, or repreſented

* See NOTE LXXXIII.

† Voyage de Ulloa, i. 335. Lettr. Edif. &c. 15. 348.

with

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with ſo little fidelity. Prieſts and miſſionaries are the perſons who have had the beſt opportunities of carrying on this inquiry, among the moſt uncivilized of the American tribes. Their minds engroſſed by the doctrines of their own religion, and habituated to its inſtitutions, are apt to diſcover ſomething that reſemble thoſe objects of their veneration, in the opinions and rites of every people. Whatever they contemplate, they view through one medium, and draw and accommodate it to their own ſyſtem. They ſtudy to reconcile the inſtitutions, which fall under their obſervation, to their own creed, not to explain them according to the rude notions of the people themſelves. They aſcribe to them ideas which they are incapable of forming, and ſuppoſe them to be acquainted with principles and facts, which it is impoſſible that they ſhould know. Hence, even among the moſt barbarous nations in America, ſome miſſionaries have been induced to believe, that they had diſcovered traces, no leſs diſtinct than amazing, of their acquaintance with the ſublime myſteries and peculiar inſtitutions of Chriſtianity. From their own interpretation of certain expreſſions and ceremonies, they concluded that theſe people had ſome knowledge of the doctrine of the Trinity, of the incarnation of the Son of God, of his expiatory ſacrifice, of the virtue of the croſs, and of the efficacy of the ſacraments *. In ſuch unintelligent and credulous guides as theſe, we can place little confidence.

Peculiar difficulties in this inquiry.

But, even when we make our choice of conductors with the greateſt care, we muſt not follow them with implicit faith. An inquiry into the religious notions of rude nations is involved in

* Venegas, i. 88. 92. Torquemada, ii. 445. Garcia Origen. 122. Herrera, dec. 4. lib. ix. c. 7. dec. 5. lib. iv. c. 7.

peculiar

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peculiar intricacies, and we muſt often pauſe in order to ſeparate the facts which our informers relate, from the reaſonings with which they are accompanied, or the theories which they build upon them. Several pious writers, more attentive to the importance of the ſubject than to the condition of the people whoſe ſentiments they were endeavouring to diſcover, have beſtowed much unprofitable labour in reſearches of this nature *.

Confined to two articles.

THERE are two fundamental doctrines, upon which the whole ſyſtem of religion, as far as it can be diſcovered by the light of nature, is eſtabliſhed. The one reſpects the being of a God, the other the immortality of the ſoul. To diſcover the ideas of the uncultivated nations under our review with regard to theſe important points, is not only an object of curioſity, but may afford inſtruction. To theſe two articles I ſhall confine my reſearches, leaving ſubordinate opinions, and the detail of local ſuperſtitions, to more minute inquiries. Whoever has had any opportunity of examining into the religious opinions of perſons in the inferior ranks of life, even in the moſt enlightened and civilized nations, will find that their ſyſtem of belief is derived from inſtruction, not diſcovered by inquiry. That numerous part of the human ſpecies whoſe lot is labour, whoſe principal and almoſt ſole occupation is to ſecure ſubſiſtence, views the arrangement and operations of nature with little reflection, and has neither leiſure nor capacity for entering into that path of refined and intricate ſpeculation which conducts to the knowledge of the principles of natural religion. In the early and moſt rude periods of ſavage life, ſuch diſquiſitions are altogether unknown. When the intellectual powers are juſt beginning to unfold, and their firſt feeble exertions are directed towards a few ob-

The being of God.

* See NOTE LXXXIV.

jects

jects of primary neceſſity and uſe; when the faculties of the mind are ſo limited, as not to have formed abſtract or general ideas; when language is ſo barren, as to be deſtitute of names to diſtinguiſh any thing that is not perceived by ſome of the ſenſes; it is prepoſterous to expect that man ſhould be capable of tracing with accuracy the relation between cauſe and effect; or to ſuppoſe that he ſhould riſe from the contemplation of the one to the knowledge of the other, and form juſt conceptions of a Deity, as the Creator and Governor of the univerſe. The idea of creation is ſo familiar, wherever the mind is enlarged by ſcience, and illuminated with revelation, that we ſeldom reflect how profound and abſtruſe this idea is, or conſider what progreſs man muſt have made in obſervation and reſearch, before he could arrive at any knowledge of this elementary principle in religion. Accordingly, ſeveral tribes have been diſcovered in America, which have no idea whatever of a Supreme Being, and no rites of religious worſhip. Inattentive to that magnificent ſpectacle of beauty and order preſented to their view, unaccuſtomed to reflect either upon what they themſelves are, or to inquire who is the author of their exiſtence, men, in their ſavage ſtate, paſs their days, like the animals around them, without knowledge or veneration of any ſuperior power. They have not in their languages any name for the Deity, nor have the moſt accurate obſervers been able to diſcover any practice or inſtitution which ſeemed to imply that they recognized his authority, or were ſolicitous to obtain his favour *. It is only among men in the

* Biet, 539. Lery ap De Bry, iii. 221. Nieuhoff. Church. Coll. ii. 132. Lettr. Edif. 2. 177. Id. 12, 13. Venegas, i. 87. Lozano Deſcript. del Gran Chaco, 59. Fernand. Miſſion. de Chiquit. 39. Gumilla, ii. 156. Rochefort Hiſt. des Antilles. p. 468. Margrave Hiſt. in Append. de Chillienſibus, 286. Ulloa Notic Americ. 335, &c. Barrere, 218, 219. Harcourt Voy. to Guiana. Purch. Pilgr. iv. p 1273. Account of Braſil, by a Portugueſe. Ibid. p. 1289. Jones's Journal, p. 59. See NOTE LXXXV.

moſt

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moſt uncultivated ſtate of nature, and while their intellectual faculties are ſo feeble and limited as hardly to elevate them above the irrational creation, that we may diſcover this total inſenſibility to the impreſſions of any inviſible power. But the human mind, formed for religion, ſoon opens to the reception of ideas, which are deſtined, when corrected and refined, to be the great ſource of conſolation amidſt the calamities of life. Among ſome of the American tribes, ſtill in the infancy of improvement, we diſcern apprehenſions of ſome inviſible and powerful beings. Theſe apprehenſions are originally indiſtinct and perplexed, and ſeem to be ſuggeſted rather by the dread of impending evils, than to flow from gratitude for bleſſings received. While Nature holds on her courſe with uniform and undiſturbed regularity, men enjoy the benefits reſulting from it, without enquiring concerning its cauſe. But every deviation from this regular courſe rouzes and aſtoniſhes them. When they behold events to which they are not accuſtomed, they ſearch for the reaſons of them with eager curioſity. Their underſtanding is unable to penetrate into theſe; but imagination, a more forward, and ardent faculty of the mind, decides without heſitation. It aſcribes the extraordinary occurrences in nature to the influence of inviſible beings, and ſuppoſes that the thunder, the hurricane, and the earthquake, are effects of their interpoſition. Some ſuch confuſed notion of ſpiritual or inviſible power, ſuperintending over thoſe natural calamities which frequently deſolate the earth, and terrify its inhabitants, may be traced among many rude nations *. But beſides this, the diſaſters and dangers of ſavage life are ſo many, and men often find themſelves in ſituations ſo formidable, that the mind, ſenſible of its own weakneſs, has no reſource but in the guidance and protection of wiſdom

* See NOTE LXXXVI.

and

and power ſuperior to what is human. Dejected with calamities which oppreſs him, and expoſed to dangers which he cannot repel, the ſavage no longer relies upon himſelf; he feels his own impotence, and ſees no proſpect of being extricated, but by the interpoſition of ſome inviſible arm. Hence, in all unenlightened nations, the firſt rites or practices which bear any reſemblance to acts of religion, have it for their object to avert evils which men ſuffer or dread. The *Manitous* or *Okkis* of the North Americans were amulets or charms, which they imagined to be of ſuch virtue, as to preſerve the perſons who repoſe confidence in them from every diſaſterous event, or they were conſidered as tutelary ſpirits, whoſe aid they might implore in circumſtances of diſtreſs *. The *Cemis* of the iſlanders were reputed by them the authors of every calamity that afflicts the human race; they were repreſented under the moſt frightful forms, and religious homage was paid to them with no other view than to appeaſe theſe furious deities †. Even among thoſe tribes whoſe religious ſyſtem was more enlarged, and who had formed ſome conception of benevolent beings, delighted with conferring benefits, as well as of malicious powers prone to inflict evil; ſuperſtition ſtill appears as the offſpring of fear, and all its efforts were employed to avert calamities. They were perſuaded that their good deities, prompted by the beneficence of their nature, would beſtow every bleſſing in their power, without ſolicitation or acknowledgment; and their only anxiety was to ſoothe and deprecate the wrath of the powers whom they regarded as the enemies of mankind ‡.

* Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 343, &c. Creuxii Hiſt. Canad. p. 82, &c. † Oviedo, lib. iii. c. 1. p. 111. P. Martyr, decad. p. 102, &c. ‡ Tertre, ii. 365. Borde, p. 14. State of Virginia, by a Native, book iii. p. 32, 33. Dumont, i. 165. Bancroft Nat. Hiſt. of Guiana, 309

SUCH

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SUCH were the imperfect conceptions of the greater part of the Americans with respect to the interpositions of invisible agents, and such, almost universally, was the mean and illiberal object of their superstitions. Were we to trace back the ideas of other nations to that rude state in which history first presents them to our view, we should discover a surprising resemblance in their tenets and practices; and should be convinced, that, in similar circumstances, the faculties of the human mind hold nearly the same course in their progress, and arrive at almost the same conclusions. The impressions of fear are conspicuous in all the systems of superstition formed in this situation. And the most exalted notions of men rise no higher than to a perplexed apprehension of certain beings, whose power, though supernatural, is limited as well as partial.

Remarkable diversity in their religious notions.

BUT, among other tribes, which have been longer united, or have made greater progress in improvement, we discern some feeble pointing towards more just and adequate conceptions of the power that presides in nature. They seem to perceive that there must be some universal cause to whom all things are indebted for their being. If we may judge by some of their expressions, they appear to acknowledge a divine power as the maker of the world, and the disposer of all events. They denominate him the *Great Spirit* *. But these ideas are faint and confused, and when they attempt to explain them, it is manifest, that among them the word *spirit* has a meaning very different from that in which we employ it, and that they have no conception of any deity but what is corporeal. They believe their gods to be of the human form, though of a nature more excellent than man, and retail such wild incoherent

* Charlev. N. Fr. iii 343. Sagard, Voy. du Pays des Hurons, 226.

fables

fables concerning their functions and operations, as are altogether unworthy of a place in history. Even among these tribes, there is no established form of public worship; there are no temples erected in honour of their deities; and no ministers peculiarly consecrated to their service. They have the knowledge, however, of several superstitious ceremonies and practices handed down to them by tradition, and to these they have recourse with a childish credulity, when rouzed by any emergence from their usual insensibility, and excited to acknowledge the power, and to implore the protection of superior beings *.

System of the Natchez.

The tribe of the Natchez, and the people of Bogota had advanced beyond the other uncultivated nations of America in their ideas of religion, as well as in their political institutions; and it is no less difficult to explain the cause of this distinction than of that which we have already considered. The Sun was the chief object of religious worship among the Natchez In their temples which were constructed with some magnificence, and decorated with various ornaments, according to their mode of architecture, they preserved a perpetual fire, as the purest emblem of their divinity. Ministers were appointed to watch and feed this sacred flame.

The first function of the great chief of the nation, every morning, was an act of obeysance to the sun; and festivals returned at stated seasons which were celebrated by the whole community with solemn but unbloody rites †. This is the most refined species of superstition known in

* Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 345. Colden, i. 17. † Dumont, i. 158, &c. Charlev. N. Fr. 3. 417, &c. 429. Lafitau, i. 167.

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America, and, perhaps, one of the moſt natural as well as moſt ſeducing. The ſun is the apparent ſource of the joy, fertility, and life, diffuſed through nature, and while the human mind, in its early eſſays towards inquiry, contemplates and admires his univerſal and animating energy, its admiration is apt to ſtop ſhort at what is viſible, without reaching to the unſeen cauſe; and pays that adoration to the moſt glorious and beneficial work of God, which is due only to him who formed it. As fire is the pureſt and moſt active of the elements, and in ſome of its qualities and effects reſembles the ſun, it was, not improperly, choſen to be the emblem of his powerful operation. The ancient Perſians, a people far ſuperior, in every reſpect, to that rude tribe whoſe rites I am deſcribing, founded their religious ſyſtem on ſimilar principles, and eſtabliſhed a form of public worſhip, leſs groſs and exceptionable than that of any people deſtitute of guidance from revelation. This ſurpriſing co-incidence in ſentiment between two nations, in ſuch different ſtates of improvement, is one of the many ſingular and unaccountable circumſtances which occur in the hiſtory of human affairs.

AMONG the people of Bogota, the ſun and moon were likewiſe, the chief objects of veneration. Their ſyſtem of religion was more regular and complete, though leſs pure than that of the Natchez. They had temples, altars, prieſts, ſacrifices, and that long train of ceremonies, which ſuperſtition introduces wherever ſhe has fully eſtabliſhed her dominion over the minds of men. But the rites of their worſhip were cruel and bloody. They offered human victims to their deities, and many of their practices nearly reſembled the barbarous inſtitutions of

of the Mexicans, the genius of which we ſhall have an opportunity of conſidering more attentively in its proper place *.

Their ideas concerning the immortality of the ſoul,

WITH reſpect to the other great doctrine of religion, concerning the immortality of the ſoul, the ſentiments of the Americans were more united: the human mind, even when leaſt improved and invigorated by culture, ſhrinks from the thoughts of diſſolution, and looks forward with hope and expectation to a ſtate of future exiſtence. This ſentiment, reſulting from a ſecret conſciouſneſs of its own dignity, from an inſtinctive longing after immortality, is univerſal, and may be deemed natural. Upon this, are founded the moſt exalted hopes of man in his higheſt ſtate of improvement; nor has nature withheld from him this ſoothing conſolation, in the moſt early and rude period of his progreſs. We can trace this opinion from one extremity of America to the other. In ſome regions more faint and obſcure, in others more perfectly developed, but no where unknown. The moſt uncivilized of its ſavage tribes do not apprehend death as the extinction of being. All hope for a future and more happy ſtate, where they ſhall be for ever exempt from the calamities which embitter human life in its preſent condition. This they figure as a delightful country, bleſſed with perpetual ſpring, whoſe foreſts abound with game, whoſe rivers ſwarm with fiſh, where famine is never felt, and uninterrupted plenty ſhall be enjoyed without labour or toil. But as men, in forming their firſt imperfect ideas concerning the inviſible world, ſuppoſe that there they ſhall continue to feel the ſame deſires, and to be engaged in the ſame occupations; they naturally aſcribe eminence and diſtinction, in that ſtate, to the ſame qualities

* Piedrahita, Conq. del N. Reyno, p. 17, &c. Herrera, dec. 6. lib. v. c. 6.

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and talents which are here the object of their esteem. The Americans, accordingly, allotted the highest place, in their country of spirits, to the skilful hunter, to the adventurous and successful warrior, to such as had surprised and slain the greatest number of enemies, who had tortured many of their captives, and devoured their flesh *.

induce them to bury arms, &c. with the dead.

These notions were so prevalent, that they gave rise to an universal custom, which is, at once, the strongest evidence that the Americans believe in a future state, and the best illustration of what they expect there. As they imagine, that the dead begin their career anew in the world whither they are gone, that they may not enter upon it defenceless and unprovided, they bury with them their bow, their arrows, and other weapons used in hunting or war; they deposite in their tombs the skins or stuffs of which they make garments, Indian corn, manioc, venison, domestic utensils, and whatever is reckoned among the necessaries in their simple mode of Life †. In some provinces, upon the decease of a cazique or chief, a certain number of his wives, of his favourites, and of his slaves, were put to death, and interred together with him, that he might appear with the same dignity in his future station, and be waited upon by the same attendants ‡. This persuasion is so deep-rooted, that many of their retainers offer themselves as voluntary victims, and court the privilege of accompanying

* Lery ap De Bry, iii. 222. Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 351, &c. De la Potherie, ii. 45, &c. iii. 5. † Chronica de Cieca de Leon, c. 28. Sagard, 288. Creux. Hist. Canad. p. 91. Rochefort, Hist. des Antilles, 568. Biet, 391. De la Potherie, ii. 44. iii. 8. Blanco, Convers. de Piritu, p. 35. ‡ Dumont, Louisiane, i. 280, &c. Oviedo, lib. v. c. 3. Gomara, Hist. Gen. c. 28. P. Mart. decad. 304. Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 421. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. iii. c. 3. P. Melchior Hernandez, Memor. de Chiriqui. Coll. Orig. Papers, i. Chron. de Cieca de Leon, c. 33.

their

their departed maſter, as an high diſtinction. It has been found difficult, on ſome occaſions, to ſet bounds to this enthuſiaſm of affectionate duty, and to reduce the train of a favourite leader to ſuch a number as the tribe could afford to ſpare *.

Superſtition connected with devotion.

AMONG the Americans, as well as other uncivilized nations, many of the rights and obſervances which bear ſome reſemblance to acts of religion, have no connection with devotion, but proceed from a fond deſire of prying into futurity. The human mind is moſt apt to feel, and to diſcover this vain curioſity, when its own powers are moſt feeble and uninformed. Aſtoniſhed with occurrences, of which it is unable to comprehend the cauſe, it naturally fancies that there is ſomething myſterious and wonderful in their origin. Alarmed at events, of which it cannot diſcern the iſſue or the conſequences, it has recourſe to other means of diſcovering them, than the exerciſe of its own ſagacity. Wherever ſuperſtition is ſo eſtabliſhed as to form a regular ſyſtem, this deſire of penetrating into the ſecrets of futurity is connected with it. Divination becomes a religious act. Prieſts, as the miniſters of Heaven, pretend to deliver its oracles to men. They are the only ſoothſayers, augurs, and magicians, who poſſeſs the ſacred and important art of diſcloſing what is hid from other eyes.

This department belongs to their phyſicians.

BUT, among rude nations, who pay no veneration to any ſuperintending power, and who have no eſtabliſhed rites or miniſters of religion, their curioſity to diſcover what is future and unknown is cheriſhed by a different principle, and derives

* See NOTE LXXXVII.

ſtrength

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ſtrength from another alliance. As the diſeaſes of men, in the ſavage ſtate, are like thoſe of the animal creation, few but extremely violent, their impatience under what they ſuffer, and ſolicitude for the recovery of health, ſoon inſpired them with extraordinary reverence for ſuch as pretended to underſtand the nature of their maladies, or to preſerve them from their ſudden and fatal effects. Theſe ignorant pretenders, however, were ſuch utter ſtrangers to the ſtructure of the human frame, as to be equally unacquainted with the cauſes of its diſorders and the manner in which they will terminate. Enthuſiaſm, mingled frequently with ſome portion of craft, ſupplied what they wanted in ſcience. They imputed the origin of diſeaſes to ſupernatural influence, and preſcribed or performed a variety of myſterious rites, which they gave out to be of power ſufficient to remove them. The credulity and love of the marvellous, natural to uninformed men, favoured the deception, and prepared them to be the dupes of their impoſture. Among ſavages, their firſt phyſicians are a kind of conjurers or wizards, who boaſt that they know what is paſt, and can foretell what is to come. Incantations, ſorcery, and mummeries of diverſe kinds, no leſs ſtrange than frivolous, are the means which they employ to expel the imaginary cauſes of malignity *; and, relying upon the efficacy of theſe, they predict with confidence what will be the fate of their deluded patients. Thus ſuperſtition in its earlieſt form flowed from the ſolicitude of man to be delivered from preſent diſtreſs, not from his dread of evils awaiting him in a future life, and was originally ingrafted on medicine, not on religion. One of the firſt, and moſt intelligent hiſtorians of America

* P. Melch. Hernandez, Memorial de Cheriqui. Collect. Orig. Pap. i.

was

was ſtruck with this alliance between the art of divination and that of phyſic, among the people of Hiſpaniola *. But this was not peculiar to them. The *Alexis*, the *Piayas*, the *Autmoins*, or whatever was the diſtinguiſhing name of their diviners and charmers in other parts of America, were all the phyſicians of their reſpective tribes, in the ſame manner as the *Buhitos* of Hiſpaniola. As their function led them to apply to the human mind when enfeebled by ſickneſs, and as they found it, in that ſeaſon of dejection, prone to be alarmed with imaginary fears, or amuſed with vain hopes, they eaſily induced it to rely with implicit confidence on the virtue of their ſpells, and the certainty of their predictions †.

Gradually extends.

WHENEVER men acknowledge the reality of ſupernatural power and diſcernment in one inſtance, they have a propenſity to admit it in others. The Americans did not long ſuppoſe the efficacy of conjuration to be confined to one ſubject. They had recourſe to it in every ſituation of danger or diſtreſs. When the events of war were peculiarly diſaſtrous, when they met with unforeſeen diſappointments in hunting, when inundation or drought threatened their corps with deſtruction, they called upon their conjurers to begin their incantations, in order to diſcover the cauſes of thoſe calamities, or to foretell what would be their iſſue §. Their confidence in this deluſive art gradually increaſed, and manifeſted itſelf in all the occurrences of life. When involved in any difficulty, or about

* Oviedo, lib. v. c. i. † Herrera. dec. i. lib. iii. c. 4. Oſborne, Coll. ii. 860. Dumont, i. 169, &c. Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 361. 364, &c. Lawſon, N. Carol. 214. Ribas, Triumph, p. 17. Biet, 386. De la Potherie, ii. 35, &c.

§ Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 3. Dumont, i. 173. Fernand. Relac. de los Chiquit. p. 40. Lozano, 84. Margrave, 279.

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to enter upon any tranſaction of moment, every individual regularly conſulted the ſorcerer, depended upon his inſtructions to extricate him from the former, and to direct his conduct in the latter. Even among the rudeſt tribes in America, ſuperſtition appears in this form, and divination is an art in high eſteem. Long before man had acquired ſuch knowledge of a deity as inſpires reverence and leads to adoration, we obſerve him ſtretching out a preſumptuous hand to draw aſide that veil with which providence kindly conceals its purpoſes from human knowledge; and we find him labouring, with fruitleſs anxiety, to penetrate into the myſteries of the divine adminiſtration. To diſcern, and to worſhip a ſuperintending power, is an evidence of the enlargement and maturity of the human underſtanding; a vain deſire of prying into futurity, is the error of its infancy, and a proof of its weakneſs.

FROM this weakneſs proceeded, likewiſe, the faith of the Americans in dreams, their obſervation of omens, their attention to the chirping of birds and the cries of animals, all which they ſuppoſe to be indications of future events, and if any one of theſe prognoſtics is deemed unfavourable, they inſtantly abandon the purſuit of thoſe meaſures on which they are moſt eagerly bent *.

Detached cuſtoms.

VIII. BUT if we would form a complete idea of the uncultivated nations of America, we muſt not paſs unobſerved ſome ſingular cuſtoms, which, though univerſal and characteriſtic, could not be reduced, with propriety, to any of the articles

* Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 262. 353. Stadius, ap de Bry, iii. 120. Creuxij, Hiſt. Canad. 84. Techo, Hiſt. of Parag. Church. Coll. vi. 37. De la Potherie, iii. 6.

into

into which I have divided my inquiry concerning their manners. BOOK IV.

Among ſavages, in every part of the globe, the love of dancing is a favourite paſſion. As a great part of their time languiſhes away in liſtleſs indolence, without any occupation to rouze or intereſt them, they delight univerſally in a paſtime which calls forth the active powers of their nature into exerciſe. The Spaniards, when they firſt viſited America, were aſtoniſhed at the fondneſs of the natives for dancing, and beheld with wonder a people, cold and unanimated in moſt of their other purſuits, kindle into life, and exert themſelves with ardour, as often as this favourite amuſement recurred. Among them, indeed, dancing ought not to be denominated an amuſement. It is a ſerious and important occupation, which mingles in every occurrence of public or private life. If any intercourſe be neceſſary between two American tribes, the ambaſſadors of the one approach in a ſolemn dance, and preſent the calumet or emblem of peace; the ſachems of the other receive it with the ſame ceremony *. If war is denounced againſt an enemy, it is by a dance, expreſſive of the reſentment which they feel, and of the vengeance which they meditate †. If the wrath of their gods is to be appeaſed, or their beneficence to be celebrated; if they rejoice at the birth of a child, or mourn the death of a friend ‡, they have dances appropriated to each of theſe ſituations, and ſuited to the different ſentiments with which they are then animated. Love of dancing.

* De la Potherie Hiſt. ii. 17, &c. Charlev. N. Fr. ii. 211. 297. La Hontan. i. 100. 137. Hennepin. Decou. 149, &c.
† Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 298. Lafitau, i. 523.
‡ Joutel, 343. Gomara, Hiſt. Gen. c. 196.

If

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If a perſon is indiſpoſed, a dance is preſcribed as the moſt effectual means of reſtoring him to health; and if he himſelf cannot endure the fatigue of ſuch an exerciſe, the phyſician or conjurer performs it in his name, as if the virtue of his activity could be transferred to his patient *.

All their dances are imitations of ſome action; and though the muſic by which they are regulated, is extremely ſimple and tireſome to the ear by its dull monotony, ſome of their dances appear wonderfully expreſſive and animated. The war-dance is, perhaps, the moſt ſtriking. It is the repreſentation of a complete American campaign. The departure of the warriors from their village, their march into the enemy's country, the caution with which they encamp, the addreſs with which they ſtation ſome of their party in ambuſh, the manner of ſurprizing the enemy, the noiſe and ferocity of the combat, the ſcalping of thoſe who are ſlain, the ſeizing of priſoners, the triumphant return of the conquerors, and the torture of the victims, are ſucceſſively exhibited. The performers enter with ſuch enthuſiaſtic ardour into their ſeveral parts, their geſtures, their countenance, their voice are ſo wild and ſo well adapted to their various ſituations, that Europeans can hardly believe it to be a mimic ſcene, or view it without emotions of fear and horror †.

But however expreſſive ſome of the American dances may be, there is one circumſtance in them remarkable, and connected with the character of the race. The ſongs, the dances, the amuſements of other nations, expreſſive of the ſentiments

* Denys Hiſt. Nat. 189. Brickell, 372. De la Potherie, ii. 36. † De la Potherie, ii. 116. Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 297. Lafitau, i. 523.

which

which animate their hearts, are often adapted to display or excite that ſenſibility which mutually attaches the ſexes. Among ſome people, ſuch is the ardour of this paſſion, that love is almoſt the ſole object of feſtivity and joy; and as rude nations are ſtrangers to delicacy, and unaccuſtomed to diſguiſe any emotion of their minds, their dances are often extremely wanton and indecent. Such is the *Calenda*, of which the natives of Africa are ſo paſſionately fond *; and ſuch the feats of the dancing girls, which the Aſiatics contemplate with ſo much avidity of deſire. But, among the Americans, more cold and indifferent to their females, from cauſes which I have already explained, this paſſion mingles but little with their feſtivals and paſtimes. Their ſongs and dances are moſtly ſolemn and martial, they are connected with ſome of the ſerious and important affairs of life †, and having no relation to love or gallantry, are ſeldom common to the two ſexes, but executed by the men and women apart §. If, on ſome occaſions, the women are permitted to join in the feſtival, the character of the entertainment is ſtill the ſame, and no movement or geſture is expreſſive of attachment, or encourages familiarity ‖.

Paſſion for gaming.

An immoderate love of play, eſpecially at games of hazard, which ſeems to be natural to all people unaccuſtomed to the occupations of regular induſtry, is likewiſe univerſal among the Americans.

* Adanſon, Voy. to Senegal, p. iii. 287. Labat, Voyages, iv. 463. Sloane Hiſt. Nat. of Jam. Introd. p. 48. Fermin, Deſcript. de Surin. i. p. 139. † Deſcript. of N. France. Oſborne, Coll. ii. 883. Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 84. § Wafer's Account of Iſthmus, &c. 169. Lery ap de Bry, iii. 177. Lozano, Hiſt. de Parag. i. 149. Herrera, dec. 2. lib. vii. c. 8. dec. 4. lib. x. c. 4. See NOTE LXXXVIII. ‖ Barrere, Fr. Equin. p. 191.

The

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The ſame cauſes, which ſo often prompt perſons at their eaſe in civilized life to have recourſe to this paſtime, render it the delight of the ſavage. The former are independent of labour, the latter do not feel the neceſſity of it, and as both are unemployed, they run with tranſport to whatever is of power to ſtir and agitate their minds. Hence the Americans, who at other times are ſo indifferent, ſo phlegmatic, ſo ſilent, and ſo diſintereſted, as ſoon as they engage in play become rapacious, impatient, noiſy, and almoſt frantic with eagerneſs. Their furs, their domeſtic utenſils, their clothes, their arms, are ſtaked at the gaming-table, and when all is loſt, high as their ſenſe of independence is, in a wild emotion of deſpair or of hope, they will often riſk their perſonal liberty, upon a ſingle caſt *. Among ſeveral tribes, ſuch gaming parties frequently recur, and become their moſt acceptable entertainment at every great feſtival. Superſtition, which is apt to take hold of thoſe paſſions which are moſt vigorous, frequently lends its aid to confirm and ſtrengthen this favourite inclination. Their conjurers are accuſtomed to preſcribe a ſolemn match at play, as one of the moſt efficacious methods of appeaſing their gods, or of reſtoring the ſick to health †.

and for drinking.

From cauſes ſimilar to thoſe which render them fond of play, the Americans are extremely addicted to drunkenneſs. It ſeems to have been one of the firſt exertions of human ingenuity to diſcover ſome compoſition of an intoxicating quality; and there is hardly any nation ſo rude, or ſo deſtitute of invention as not to have ſucceeded in this fatal reſearch.

* Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 261. 318. Lafitau, ii. 338, &c. Ribes, Triumf. 13. Brickell, 335. † Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 262.

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The moſt barbarous of the American tribes have been ſo unfortunate as to attain this art; and even thoſe who are ſo deficient in knowledge, as to be unacquainted with the method of giving an inebriating ſtrength to liquors by fermentation, can accompliſh the ſame end by other means. The people of the iſlands of North America, and of California, uſed, for this purpoſe, the ſmoke of tobacco, drawn up with a certain inſtrument into the noſtrils, the fumes of which aſcending into the brain, they felt all the tranſports and frenzy of intoxication *. In almoſt every other part of the New World, the natives poſſeſſed the art of extracting an intoxicating liquid from maize or the manioc root, the ſame ſubſtances which they convert into bread. The operation by which they effect this, nearly reſembles the common one of brewing, but with this difference, that in place of yeſt, they uſe a nauſeous infuſion of a certain quantity of maize o manioc chewed by their women. The ſaliva excites a vigorous fermentation, and in a few days the liquor becomes fit for drinking. It is not diſagreeable to the taſte, and when ſwallowed in large quantities is of an intoxicating quality. This is the general beverage of the Americans, which they diſtinguiſh by various names, and for which they feel ſuch a violent and inſatiable deſire, as it is not eaſy either to conceive or deſcribe. Among poliſhed nations, where a ſucceſſion of various functions and amuſements keep the mind in continual occupation, the deſire for ſtrong drink is regulated, in a great meaſure, by the climate, and increaſes or diminiſhes according to the variations of its temperature. In

* Oviedo Hiſt. ap. Ramuſ. iii. 113. Venegas, i. 68. Naufrag. de Cabeca de Vaca, cap. 26. See NOTE LXXXIX. † Stadius ap de Bry, iii. 111. Lery, ibid. 175.

warm

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warm regions, the delicate and ſenſible frame of the inhabitants does not require the ſtimulation of fermented liquors. In colder countries, the conſtitution of the natives, more robuſt and more ſluggiſh, ſtands in need of generous liquors to quicken and animate it. But among ſavages, the deſire of ſomething that is of power to intoxicate, is in every ſituation the ſame. All the people of America, whether natives of the torrid zone, or inhabitants of its more temperate regions, or placed by a harder fate in the ſevere climates towards its northern or ſouthern extremity, appear to be equally under the dominion of this appetite *. Such a ſimilarity of taſte, among people in ſuch different ſituations, muſt be aſcribed to the influence of ſome moral cauſe, and cannot be conſidered as the effect of any phyſical or conſtitutional want. While engaged in war or in the chaſe, the ſavage is often in the moſt intereſting ſituations, and all the powers of his nature are rouzed to the moſt vigorous exertions. But thoſe animating ſcenes are ſucceeded by long intervals of repoſe, during which the warrior meets with nothing that he deems of ſufficient dignity or importance to merit his attention. He languiſhes and mopes in this ſeaſon of indolence. The poſture of his body is an emblem of the ſtate of his mind. In one climate, cowering over the fire in his cabin; in another, ſtretched under the ſhade of ſome tree: he dozes away his time in ſleep, or in an unthinking joyleſs inactivity, not far removed from it. As ſtrong liquors awake him from this torpid ſtate, give a briſker motion to his ſpirits, and enliven him more thoroughly than either dancing or gaming, his love of them is exceſſive. A ſavage, when not engaged in action, is a penſive melancholy animal;

* Gumilla, i. 257. Lozano Deſcrip. de Gran Chacho, 56. 103. Ribas, 8. Ulloa, i. 249. 337. Marchais, iv. 436. Fernandez Miſſion. de las Chiquit. 35. Barrere, p. 203. Blanco Converſ. de Piritu, 31.

animal; but as ſoon as he taſtes, or has a proſpect of taſting, the intoxicating draught, he becomes gay and frolicſome *. Whatever be the occaſion, or pretext, on which the Americans aſſemble, the meeting always terminates in a debauch. Many of their feſtivals have no other object, and they welcome the return of them with tranſports of joy. As they are not accuſtomed to reſtrain any appetite, they ſet no bounds to this. The riot often continues without intermiſſion ſeveral days: and whatever be the fatal effects of their exceſs, they never ceaſe from drinking as long as one drop of liquor remains. The perſons of greateſt eminence, the moſt diſtinguiſhed warriors, and the chiefs moſt renowned for their wiſdom, have no more command of themſelves than the moſt obſcure member of the community. Their eagerneſs for preſent enjoyment renders them blind to its fatal conſequences; and thoſe very men, who, in other ſituations, ſeem to poſſeſs a force of mind more than human, are in this inſtance inferior to children in foreſight, as well as conſideration, and mere ſlaves of brutal appetite †. When their paſſions, naturally ſtrong, are heightened and inflamed by drink, they are guilty of the moſt enormous outrages, and the feſtivity ſeldom concludes without deeds of violence, or bloodſhed ‡.

But, amidſt this wild debauch, there is one circumſtance remarkable; the women, in moſt of the American tribes, are not permitted to partake of it §. Their province is to prepare the liquor, to ſerve it about to the gueſts, and to take care of their huſbands and friends, when their reaſon is

* Melendez Teſoros Verdad. iii. 369. Ulloa, i. 338. Mon. Ind. i. 335.

‡ Lettr. Edif. ii. 178.

† Ribas, 9. Torquemada

§ See NOTE XC.

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overpowered. This excluſion of the women from an enjoyment ſo highly valued by ſavages, may be juſtly conſidered as a mark of their inferiority, and as an additional evidence of that contempt with which they were treated in the New World. The people of North America, when firſt diſcovered, were not acquainted with any intoxicating drink; but as the Europeans early found it their intereſt to ſupply them with ſpirituous liquors, drunkenneſs ſoon became as univerſal among them as among their countrymen to the ſouth; and their women having acquired this new taſte, indulge it with as little decency and moderation as the men *.

Put to death the aged and incurable.

It were endleſs to enumerate all the detached cuſtoms which have excited the wonder of travellers in America; but I cannot omit one ſeemingly as ſingular as any that has been mentioned. When their parents and other relations become old, or labour under any diſtemper which their ſlender knowledge of the healing art cannot remove, they cut ſhort their days with a violent hand, in order to be relieved from the burden of ſupporting and tending them. This practice prevailed among the ruder tribes in every part of the continent, from Hudſon's Bay to the river De la Plata; and however ſhocking it may be to thoſe ſentiments of tenderneſs and attachment, which, in civilized life, we are apt to conſider as congenial with our frame, the condition of man in the ſavage ſtate leads and reconciles him to it. The ſame hardſhips and difficulty of procuring ſubſiſtence, which deter ſavages, in ſome caſes, from rearing their children, prompt them to deſtroy the aged and infirm. The declining ſtate of the one is as helpleſs

* Hutchinſon, Hiſt. of Maſſachuſ. 469. Lafitau, ii. 125. Sagard, 146.

as

as the infancy of the other. The former are no leſs unable than the latter to perform the functions that belong to a warrior or hunter, or to endure thoſe various diſtreſſes in which ſavages are ſo often involved, by their own want of foreſight and induſtry. Their relations feel this; and incapable of attending to the wants or weakneſſes of others, their impatience under an additional burden prompts them to extinguiſh that life which they find it difficult to ſuſtain. This is not regarded as a deed of cruelty, but as an act of mercy. An American, broken with years and infirmities, conſcious that he can no longer depend on the aid of thoſe around him, places himſelf contentedly in his grave; and it is by the hands of his children or neareſt relations that the thong is pulled, or the blow inflicted, which releaſes him for ever from the ſorrows of life *.

General eſtimate of their character.

IX. After contemplating the rude American tribes in ſuch various lights, after taking a view of their cuſtoms and manners from ſo many different ſtations, nothing remains but to form a general eſtimate of their character, compared with that of more poliſhed nations. A human being, as he comes originally from the hand of nature, is every where the ſame. At his firſt appearance in the ſtate of infancy, whether it be among the rudeſt ſavages, or in the moſt civilized ſociety, we can diſcern no quality which marks any diſtinction or ſuperiority. The capacity of improvement ſeems to be the ſame; and the talents he may afterwards acquire, as well as the virtues he may be rendered capable of exerciſing, depend entirely upon the ſtate of ſociety in which he is placed. To this ſtate his mind naturally accommodates itſelf, and from it receives its diſ-

* Caſſani Hiſt. de N. Reyno de Gran. p. 300. Piſo, p. 6. Ellis Voy. 191. Gumilla, i. 333.

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cipline and culture. In proportion to the wants which it accuſtoms a human being to feel, and the functions in which theſe engage him, his intellectual powers are called forth. According to the connections which it eſtabliſhes between him and the reſt of his ſpecies, the affections of his heart are exerted. It is only by attending to this great principle, that we can diſcover what is the character of man in every different period of his progreſs.

Intellectual powers.

If we apply it to ſavage life, and meaſure the attainments of the human mind in that ſtate by this ſtandard, we ſhall find, according to an obſervation which I have already made, that the intellectual powers of man muſt be extremely limited in their operations. They are confined within the narrow ſphere of what he deems neceſſary for ſupplying his own wants. Whatever has not ſome relation to theſe, neither attracts his attention, nor is the object of his inquiries. But however narrow the bounds may be within which the knowledge of a ſavage is circumſcribed, he poſſeſſes thoroughly that ſmall portion of it which he has attained. It was not communicated to him by formal inſtruction; he does not attend to it as matter of mere ſpeculation and curioſity; it is the reſult of his own obſervation, the fruit of his own experience, and accommodated to his condition and exigencies. While employed in the active occupations of war or hunting, he often finds himſelf in difficult and perilous ſituations, from which the efforts of his own ſagacity muſt extricate him. He is frequently engaged in meaſures where every ſtep depends upon his own ability to decide, where he muſt rely ſolely upon his own penetration to diſcern the dangers to which he is expoſed, and upon his own wiſdom in providing againſt them.

As

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As the talents of individuals are exerciſed and improved by ſuch exertions, much political wiſdom is ſaid to be diſplayed in conducting the affairs of their ſmall communities. The council of old men in an American tribe, deliberating upon its intereſts, and determining with reſpect to peace or war, has been compared to the ſenate in more poliſhed republics. The proceedings of the former, we are told, are often no leſs formal and ſagacious than thoſe of the latter. Great political wiſdom is exhibited in pondering the various meaſures propoſed, and in balancing their probable advantages, againſt the evils of which they may be productive. Much addreſs and eloquence are employed by the leaders, who aſpire at acquiring ſuch confidence with their countrymen, as to have an aſcendant in thoſe aſſemblies *. But, among ſavage tribes, the field for diſplaying political talents cannot be extenſive. Where the idea of private property is unknown, and no criminal juriſdiction is eſtabliſhed, there is hardly any function of internal government to exerciſe. Where there is no commerce, and ſcarcely any intercourſe among ſeparate tribes; where enmity is implacable, and hoſtilities are carried on almoſt without intermiſſion; there will be few points of public concern to adjuſt with their neighbours; and that department of their affairs which may be denominated foreign, cannot be ſo intricate as to require any refined policy in conducting it. Where individuals are ſo thoughtleſs and improvident as ſeldom to take effectual precautions for ſelf-preſervation, it is in vain to expect that public meaſures and deliberations will be regulated by the contemplation of remote events. It is the genius of ſavages to act from the impulſe of preſent paſſion. They have neither foreſight nor temper to form compli-

Political talents.

* Charlev. N. Fr. iii 263, &c.

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cated arrangements with reſpect to their future conduct. The conſultations of the Americans, indeed, are ſo frequent, and their negociations are ſo many *, and ſo long protracted, as to give their proceedings an extraordinary aſpect of wiſdom. But this is not owing ſo much to the depth of their ſchemes, as to the coldneſs and phlegm of their temper, which renders them ſlow in determining †. If we except the celebrated league, that united the Five Nations in Canada into a federal republic, which ſhall be conſidered in its proper place, we can diſcern few ſuch traces of political wiſdom, among the rude American tribes, as diſcovers any great degree of foreſight or extent of intellectual abilities. Even among them, we ſhall find public meaſures more frequently directed by the impetuous ferocity of their youth, than regulated by the experience and wiſdom of their old men.

Degree of affection.

As the condition of man in the ſavage ſtate is unfavourable to the progreſs of the underſtanding, it has a tendency likewiſe, in ſome reſpects, to check the exerciſe of affection, and to render the heart contracted. The ſtrongeſt feeling in the mind of a ſavage is a ſenſe of his own independence. He has ſacrificed ſo ſmall a portion of his natural liberty by becoming a member of ſociety, that he remains, in a great degree, the ſole maſter of his own actions ‡. He often takes his reſolutions alone, without conſulting, or feeling any connection with the perſons around him. In many of his operations, he ſtands as much detached from the reſt of his ſpecies, as if he had formed no union with them. Conſcious how little he depends upon other men, he is apt to view them with a careleſs indifference. Even

* See NOTE XCI. † Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 271.

‡ Fernandez Miſſion. de los Chiquit. 33.

Even the force of his mind contributes to increaſe this unconcern, and as he looks not beyond himſelf in deliberating with reſpect to the part which he ſhould act, his ſolicitude about the conſequences of it ſeldom extends farther. He purſues his own career, and indulges his own fancy, without inquiring or regarding whether what he does be agreeable or offenſive to others, whether they may derive benefit, or receive hurt from it. Hence the ungovernable caprice of ſavages, their impatience under any ſpecies of reſtraint, their inability to ſuppreſs or moderate any inclination, the ſcorn or neglect with which they receive advice, their high eſtimation of themſelves, and their contempt of other men. Among them, the pride of independence produces almoſt the ſame effects with intereſtedneſs in a more advanced ſtate of ſociety, it refers every thing to a man himſelf, and renders the gratification of his own wiſhes the meaſure and end of conduct.

Hardneſs of heart.

To the ſame cauſe may be imputed the hardneſs of heart, and inſenſibility, remarkable in all ſavage nations. Their minds, rouzed only by ſtrong emotions, are little ſuſceptible of gentle, delicate, or tender affections *. Their union is ſo incomplete, that each individual acts as if he retained all his natural rights entire and undiminiſhed. If a favour is conferred upon him, or a ſervice performed for his behoof, he receives it with much ſatisfaction, becauſe it contributes to his enjoyment; but this ſentiment extends not beyond himſelf, it excites no ſenſe of obligation, he neither feels gratitude, nor thinks of making any return †. Even, among perſons the moſt cloſely connected, there is little correſpondence or exchange of thoſe good offices which

* Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 309. † Oviedo Hiſt. lib. xvi. c. 2.

See NOTE XCII.

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ſtrengthen attachment, mollify the heart, and ſweeten the intercourſe of life. Their high ideas of independence nouriſh a ſullen reſerve, which keeps them at a diſtance from each other. The neareſt relations are mutually afraid to make any demand, or to ſolicit any ſervice *, leſt it ſhould be conſidered by the other as impoſing a burden, or laying a reſtraint upon his will.

Inſenſibility.

I HAVE already remarked the influence of this hard unfeeling temper upon domeſtic life, with reſpect to the connection between huſband and wife, as well as that between parents and children. Its effects are no leſs conſpicuous, in the performance of thoſe mutual offices of tenderneſs which the infirmities of our nature frequently exact. Among ſome tribes, when any of their number are ſeized with a diſtemper, they are generally abandoned by all around them, who, careleſs of their recovery, fly in the utmoſt conſternation from the ſuppoſed danger of infection †. But even where they are not thus deſerted, the cold indifference with which they are attended can afford them little conſolation. No look of ſympathy, no ſoothing expreſſions, no officious ſervices contribute to alleviate or to make them forget their ſufferings ‡. Their neareſt relations will often refuſe to ſubmit to the ſmalleſt inconveniency, or to part with the leaſt trifle, however much it may tend to their accommodation or relief §. So little is the breaſt of a ſavage ſuſceptible of thoſe ſentiments which prompt men to that feeling attention which mitigates diſtreſs, that, in ſome provinces of America, the Spaniards have found it neceſſary

* De la Potherie, iii. 28. † Lettre de P. Cataneo ap Muratori Chriſtian, i. 309. Tertre, ii. 410. Lozano, 100. Herrera, dec. 4. lib. viii. c. 5. dec. 5. lib. iv. c. 2. Falkner's Deſcript. of Patagonia, 98. ‡ Gumilla, i. 329. Lozano, 100.
§ Garica Origen, &c. 90. Herrera, dec. 4. lib. viii. c. 5.

neceſſary to inforce the common duties of humanity by poſitive laws, and to oblige huſbands and wives, parents and children, under ſevere penalties, to take care of each other during their ſickneſs *. The ſame harſhneſs of temper is ſtill more conſpicuous in their treatment of the animal creation. Prior to their intercourſe with the people of Europe, the North Americans had ſome tame dogs, which accompanied them in their hunting excurſions, and ſerved them with all the ardour and fidelity peculiar to their ſpecies. But, inſtead of that fond attachment, which the hunter naturally feels towards thoſe uſeful companions of his toils, they requite their ſervices with neglect, ſeldom feed, and never careſs them †. In other provinces, the Americans have become acquainted with the domeſtic animals of Europe, and avail themſelves of their ſervice; but it is univerſally obſerved that they always treat them harſhly ‡, and never employ any method either for breaking or managing them, but force and cruelty. In every part of the deportment of man in his ſavage ſtate, whether towards his equals of the human ſpecies, or towards the animals below him, we recogniſe the ſame character, and trace the operations of a mind, intent on its own gratifications, and regulated by its own caprice, without much attention or ſenſibility to the ſentiments and feelings of the beings around him.

Taciturnity.

AFTER explaining how unfavourable the ſavage ſtate is to the cultivation of the underſtanding, and to the improvement of the heart, I ſhould not have thought it neceſſary to mention what may be deemed its leſſer defects, if the character of nations, as well

* Cogulludo Hiſt. de Yucathan, p. 300. † Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 169. 337. ‡ Ulloa Notic. American. 312.

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as individuals, were not often more distinctly marked by circumstances apparently trivial, than by those of greater moment. A savage, frequently, placed in situations of danger and distress, depending on himself alone, and wrapt up in his own thoughts and schemes, is a serious melancholy animal. His attention to others is small. The range of his own ideas is narrow. Hence that taciturnity which is so disgusting to men accustomed to the open intercourse of social conversation. When not engaged in action, the Americans often sit whole days in one posture, without opening their lips *. When they go forth to war, or to the chace, they usually march in a line at some distance from one another, and without exchanging a word. The same profound silence is observed when they row together in a canoe †. It is only when they are animated by intoxicating liquors, or rouzed by the jollity of the festival and dance, that they become gay and conversible.

Cunning.

To the same causes may be imputed the refined cunning with which they form and execute their schemes. Men, who are not habituated to a liberal communication of their own sentiments and wishes, are apt to be so distrustful, as to place little confidence in others, and to have recourse to an insidious craft, in accomplishing their own purposes. In civilized life, those persons, who, by their situation, have but a few objects of pursuit on which their minds incessantly dwell, are most remarkable for low artifice in carrying on their little projects. Among savages, whose views are equally confined, and their attention no less persevering, those circumstances must operate still more powerfully, and gradually accustom them to a disingenuous subtlety

* Voyage de Bouguer, 102. † Charlev. iii. 340.

ſubtlety in all their tranſactions. The force of this is increaſed by habits which they acquire in carrying on the two moſt intereſting operations wherein they are engaged. With them war is a ſyſtem of craft, in which they truſt for ſucceſs to ſtratagem more than to open force, and have their invention continually on the ſtretch to circumvent and ſurpriſe their enemies. As hunters, it is their conſtant object to enſnare, in order that they may deſtroy. Accordingly, art and cunning have been univerſally obſerved as diſtinguiſhing characteriſtics of all ſavages. The people of the rude tribes of America are remarkable for their addreſs and duplicity. Impenetrably ſecret in forming their meaſures, they purſue them with a patient undeviating attention, and there is no refinement of diſſimulation which they cannot employ, in order to inſure their ſucceſs. The natives of Peru were engaged above thirty years, in concerting the plan of their inſurrection, under the vice-royalty of the marquis de Villa-Garcia, and though communicated to a great number of all different ranks, no indication of it ever tranſpired during that long period; no man betrayed his truſt, or by an unguarded look, or raſh word, gave riſe to any ſuſpicion of what was intended *. The diſſimulation and craft of individuals is no leſs remarkable than that of nations. When ſet upon deceiving, they wrap themſelves up ſo artificially, that it is impoſſible to penetrate into their intentions, or to detect their deſigns †.

Virtues.

But if there be defects or vices peculiar to the ſavage ſtate, there are, likewiſe, virtues which it inſpires,

* Voyage de Ulloa, ii. 309. † Gumilla, i. 162. Charlev. iii. 109.

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inſpires, and good qualities, to the exerciſe of which it is friendly. The bonds of ſociety ſit ſo looſe upon the members of the more rude American tribes, that they hardly feel any reſtraint. Hence the ſpirit of independence, which is the pride of a ſavage, and which he conſiders as the unalienable prerogative of man. Incapable of controul, and diſdaining to acknowlege any ſuperior, his mind, though limited in its powers, and erring in many of its purſuits, acquires ſuch elevation by the conſciouſneſs of its own freedom, that he acts on ſome occaſions with aſtoniſhing force, and perſeverence, and dignity.

Independent ſpirit.

Fortitude.

As independence nouriſhes this high ſpirit among ſavages, the perpetual wars in which they are engaged call it forth into action. Such long intervals of tranquillity as are frequent in poliſhed ſocieties, are unknown in the ſavage ſtate. Their enmities, as I have obſerved, are implacable and immortal. The valour of the youth is never allowed to ruſt in inaction. The hatchet is always in their hand, either for attack or defence. Even in their hunting excurſions, they muſt be on their guard againſt ſurpriſe from the hoſtile tribes, by which they are ſurrounded. Accuſtomed to continual alarms, they grow familiar with danger, and courage becomes an habitual virtue, reſulting naturally from their ſituation, and ſtrengthened by conſtant exertions. The mode of diſplaying fortitude may not be the ſame in ſmall and rude communities, as in more powerful and civilized ſtates. Their ſyſtem of war, and ſtandard of valour may be formed upon different principles, but in no ſituation does the human mind riſe more ſuperior to the ſenſe of danger, or the dread of death, than in its moſt ſimple and uncultivated ſtate.

ANOTHER

ANOTHER virtue remarkable among ſavages, is attachment to the community of which they are members. From the nature of their political union, one might expect this tie to be extremely feeble. But there are circumſtances which render the influence, even of their looſe mode of aſſociation, very powerful. The American tribes are ſmall; combined againſt their neighbours, in proſecution of ancient enmities, or in avenging recent injuries, their intereſts and operations are neither numerous nor complex. Theſe are objects, which the uncultivated underſtanding of a ſavage can comprehend. His heart is capable of forming connections, which are ſo little diffuſed. He aſſents with warmth to public meaſures, dictated by paſſions, ſimilar to thoſe which influence his own conduct. Hence the ardour with which individuals undertake the moſt perilous ſervice, when the community deems it neceſſary. Hence their fierce and deep-rooted antipathy to the public enemies. Hence their zeal for the honour of their tribe, and that love of their country, which prompts them to brave danger that it may triumph, and to endure the moſt exquiſite torments without a groan, that it may not be diſgraced.

Attachment to their community.

THUS, in every ſituation where a human being can be placed, even the moſt unfavourable, there are virtues that peculiarly belong to it; there are affections which it calls forth; there is a ſpecies of happineſs which it yields. Nature, with moſt beneficent intention, conciliates and forms the mind to its condition, the ideas and wiſhes of man extend not beyond that ſtate of ſociety to which he is habituated. What it preſents as objects of contemplation or enjoyment, fill and ſatisfy his mind, and he can hardly conceive any other mode of life to be pleaſant or even tolerable. The Tartar, accuſtomed to

Satisfaction with their own condition.

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to roam over extenſive plains, and to ſubſiſt on the product of his herds, imprecates upon his enemy, as the greateſt of all curſes, that he may be condemned to reſide in one place, and to be nouriſhed with the top of a weed. The rude Americans, fond of their own purſuits, and ſatisfied with their own lot, are equally unable to comprehend the intention or utility of the various accommodations, which, in more poliſhed ſociety, are deemed eſſential to the comfort of life. Far from complaining of their own ſituation, or viewing that of men in a more improved ſtate with admiration or envy, they regard themſelves as the ſtandard of excellence, as beings the beſt entitled, as well as the moſt perfectly qualified, to enjoy real happineſs. Unaccuſtomed to any reſtraint upon their will or their actions, they behold with amazement the inequality of rank, and the ſubordination which take place in civilized life, and conſider the voluntary ſubmiſſion of one man to another, as a renunciation, no leſs baſe than unaccountable, of the firſt diſtinction of humanity. Void of foreſight, as well as free from care themſelves, and delighted with that ſtate of indolent ſecurity, they wonder at the anxious precautions, the unceaſing induſtry, and complicated arrangements of Europeans, in guarding againſt diſtant evils, or providing for future wants, and exclaim againſt their prepoſterous folly, in thus multiplying the troubles, and increaſing the labour of life *. This preference of their own manners is conſpicuous on every occaſion. Even the names, by which the various nations wiſh to be diſtinguiſhed are aſſumed from this idea of their own pre-eminence. The appellation which the Iroquois give to themſelves is, *the chief of men* †. *Caraibe*, the

* Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 308. Lahontan, ii. 97.
† Colden, i. 3.

the original name of the fierce inhabitants of the windward islands, signifies *the warlike people* *. The Cherokee, from an idea of their own superiority, call the Europeans *Nothings*, or the *accursed race*, and assume themselves the name of The beloved people †. The same principle regulated the notions of the other Americans concerning the Europeans; for although, at first, they were filled with astonishment at their arts, and with dread of their power, they soon came to abate their estimation of men, whose maxims of life were so different from their own. Hence they called them the froth of the sea, men without father or mother. They supposed, that either they had no country of their own, and therefore invaded that which belonged to others ‡; or, that, being destitute of the necessaries of life at home, they were obliged to roam over the ocean, in order to rob such as were more amply provided.

MEN, thus satisfied with their condition, are far from any inclination to relinquish their own habits, or to adopt those of civilized life. The transition is too violent to be suddenly made. Even where endeavours have been used to wean a savage from his own customs, and to render the accommodations of polished society familiar to him; even where he has been allowed to taste of those pleasures, and has been honoured with those distinctions, which are the chief objects of our desire, he droops and languishes under the restraint of laws and forms, he seizes the first opportunity of breaking loose from them, and returns with transport to the forest or the wild, where he can enjoy a careless and uncontrouled freedom §.

THUS

* Rochefort Hist. des Antilles, 455. † Adair, Hist. of Amer. Indians, p. 32. ‡ Benzon. Hist. Novi Orbis, lib. iii. c. 21. § Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 322.

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THUS I have finiſhed a laborious delineation of the character and manners of the uncivilized tribes ſcattered over the vaſt continent of America. In this, I aſpire not at rivalling the great maſters who have painted and adorned ſavage life, either in boldneſs of deſign, or in the glow and beauty of their colouring. I am ſatisfied with the more humble merit of having perſiſted with patient induſtry, in viewing my ſubject in many various lights, and in collecting from the moſt accurate obſervers ſuch detached and often minute features, as might enable me to exhibit a portrait that reſembles the original.

General caution with reſpect to this inquiry.

BEFORE I cloſe this part of my work, one obſervation more is neceſſary, in order to juſtify the concluſions which I have formed, or to prevent the miſtakes into which ſuch as examine them may fall. In contemplating the inhabitants of a country ſo widely extended as America, great attention ſhould be paid to the diverſity of climates under which they are placed. The influence of this I have pointed out with reſpect to ſeveral important particulars, which have been the object of reſearch; but even where it has not been mentioned, it ought not to be overlooked. The provinces of America are of ſuch different temperament, that this alone is ſufficient to conſtitute a diſtinction between their inhabitants. In every part of the earth where man exiſts, the power of climate operates, with deciſive influence, upon his condition and character. In thoſe countries which approach nearer to the extremes of heat or cold, this influence is ſo conſpicuous as to ſtrike every eye. Whether we conſider man merely as an animal, or as a being endowed with rational powers, which fit him for activity and ſpeculation, we ſhall find that he has uniformly

uniformly attained the greateſt perfection of which his nature is capable, in the temperate regions of the globe. There his conſtitution is moſt vigorous, his organs moſt acute, and his form moſt beautiful. There, too, he poſſeſſes a ſuperior extent of capacity, greater fertility of imagination, more enterpriſing courage, and a ſenſibility of heart which gives birth to paſſions, not only ardent, but perſevering. In this favourite ſituation he has diſplayed the utmoſt efforts of his genius, in literature, in policy, in commerce, in war, and in all the arts which improve or embelliſh life *.

This powerful operation of climate is felt moſt ſenſibly by rude nations, and produces greater effects than in ſocieties more highly poliſhed. The talents of civilized men are continually exerted in rendering their condition more comfortable; and by their ingenuity and inventions, they can, in a great meaſure, ſupply the defects, and guard againſt the inconveniencies of any climate. But the improvident ſavage is affected by every circumſtance peculiar to his ſituation. He takes no precaution either to mitigate or to improve it. Like a plant or an animal, he is formed by the climate under which he is placed, and feels the full force of its influence.

In ſurveying the rude nations of America, this natural diſtinction between the inhabitants of the temperate and torrid zones is very remarkable. They may, accordingly, be divided into two great claſſes. The one comprehends all the North Americans, from the river St. Laurence to the Gulf of Mexico, together with the people of Chili, and

* Dr. Ferguſon's Eſſay on the Hiſt. of Civil Society, part iii. c. 1.

BOOK IV. and a few ſmall tribes towards the extremity of the ſouthern continent. To the other belong all the inhabitants of the iſlands, and thoſe ſettled in the various provinces which extend from the iſthmus of Darien almoſt to the ſouthern confines of Braſil, along the eaſt ſide of the Andes. In the former, the human ſpecies appears manifeſtly to be more perfect. The natives are more robuſt, more active, more intelligent, and more courageous. They poſſeſs, in the moſt eminent degreee, that force of mind, and love of independence, which I have pointed out as the chief virtues of man in his ſavage ſtate. They have defended their liberty with perſevering fortitude againſt the Europeans who ſubdued the other rude nations of America with the greateſt eaſe. The natives of the temperate zone are the only people in the New World who are indebted for their freedom to their own valour. The North-Americans, though long encompaſſed by three formidable European powers, ſtill retain part of their original poſſeſſions, and continue to exiſt as independent nations. The people of Chili, though early invaded, ſtill maintain a gallant conteſt with the Spaniards, and have ſet bounds to their encroachments; whereas, in the warmer regions, men are more feeble in their frame, leſs vigorous in the efforts of their mind, of a gentle but daſtardly ſpirit, more enſlaved by pleaſure and ſunk in indolence. Accordingly, it is in the torrid zone that the Europeans have moſt completely eſtabliſhed their dominion over America; the moſt fertile and deſirable provinces in it are ſubjected to their yoke; and if ſeveral tribes there ſtill enjoy independence, it is either becauſe they have never been attacked by an enemy already ſatiated with conqueſt, and poſſeſſed of larger territories than he was able to occupy, or becauſe they have been

ſaved from oppreſſion by their remote and inacceſſible ſituation.

CONSPICUOUS as this diſtinction may appear between the inhabitants of thoſe different regions, it is not, however, univerſal. Moral and political cauſes, as I have formerly obſerved, affect the diſpoſition and character of individuals as well as nations, ſtill more powerfully than the influence of climate. There are, accordingly, ſome tribes, in various parts of the torrid zone, poſſeſſed of courage, high ſpirit, and the love of independence, in a degree hardly inferior to the natives of more temperate climates. We are too little acquainted with the hiſtory of thoſe people, to be able to trace the ſeveral circumſtances in their progreſs and ſituation, to which they are indebted for this remarkable pre-eminence. The fact, nevertheleſs, is certain. As early as the firſt voyage of Columbus, he received information that ſeveral of the iſlands were inhabited by the *Caribbees*, a fierce race of men, nowiſe reſembling their feeble and timid neighbours. In his ſecond expedition to the New World, he found this information to be juſt, and was himſelf a witneſs of their intrepid valour *. The ſame character they have maintained invariably in all ſubſequent conteſts with the people of our continent †; and, even in our own times, we have ſeen them make a gallant ſtand in defence of the laſt territory which the rapacity of the Europeans had left in their poſſeſſion ‡. Some nations in Braſil were no leſs eminent for vigour of mind, and bravery in war §. The people

* Life of Columbus, c. 47, 48. See NOTE XCIII.
† Rochefort Hiſt. des Antilles, 531. ‡ See NOTE XCIV.
§ Lery ap De Bry, iii. 207, &c.

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of the isthmus of Darien boldly met the Spaniards in the field, and frequently repelled those formidable invaders *. Other instances might be produced. It is not by attending to any single cause or principle, however powerful and extensive its influence may appear, that we can explain the actions, or account for the character, of men. Even the law of climate, more universal, perhaps, in its operation than any that affects the human species, cannot be applied, in judging of their conduct, without many exceptions.

* Herrera, dec. 1. lib x c. 15, &c.; dec. 2. passim.

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NOTE I. p. 7.

TYRE was ſituated at ſuch a diſtance from the Arabian Gulf or Red Sea, as made it impoſſible to convey commodities from thence to that city by land-carriage. This induced the Phenicians to render themſelves maſters of *Rhinocrura*, or *Rhinocolura*, the neareſt port in the Mediterranean to the Red Sea. They landed the cargoes which they purchaſed in Arabia, Ethiopia, and India, at Elath, the ſafeſt harbour in the Red Sea towards the north. Thence they were carried by land to Rhinocolura, the diſtance not being very conſiderable; and being reſhipped in that port, were tranſported to Tyre, and diſtributed over the world. Strabon. Geogr. Edit. Caſaub. lib. xvi. p. 1128. Diodor. Sicul. Biblioth. Hiſtor. Edit. Weſſelingi, lib. i. p. 70.

NOTE II. p. 10.

THE Periplus Hannonis is the only authentic monument of the Carthaginian ſkill in naval affairs, and one of the moſt curious fragments tranſmitted to us by antiquity. The learned and induſtrious Mr. Dodwell, in a diſſertation prefixed to the Periplus of Hanno, in the edition of the Minor Geographers publiſhed at Oxford, endeavours to prove that this is a ſpurious work, the compoſition of ſome

Greek, who aſſumed Hanno's name. But M. de Monteſquieu, in his l'Eſprit des Loix, liv. xxi. c. 8. and M. de Bougainville, in a diſſertation publiſhed tom. xxvi. of the Memoires de l'Academie des Inſcriptions, &c. have eſtabliſhed its authenticity by arguments which to me appear unanſwerable. Ramuſio has accompanied his tranſlation of this curious voyage with a diſſertation tending to illuſtrate it. Racolte de Viaggi, vol. i. p. 112. M. de Bougainville has, with great learning and ability, treated the ſame ſubjects. It appears that Hanno, according to the mode of ancient navigation, undertook this voyage in ſmall veſſels, ſo conſtructed that he could keep cloſe in with the coaſt. He ſailed from Gades to the iſland of Cerne in twelve days. This is probably what is known to the moderns by the name of the iſle of Arguim. It became the chief ſtation of the Carthaginians on that coaſt; and M. de Bougainville contends, that the ciſterns found there are monuments of the Carthaginian power and ingenuity. Proceeding from Cerne, and ſtill following the winding of the coaſt, he arrived, in ſeventeen days, at a promontory which he called *The Weſt Horn*, probably Cape Palmas. From this he advanced to another promontory, which he named *The South Horn*, and which is manifeſtly Cape de Tres Puntas, about five degrees north of the line. All the circumſtances contained in the ſhort abſtract of his journal, which is handed down to us, concerning the appearance and ſtate of the countries on the coaſt of Africa, are confirmed and illuſtrated by a compariſon with the accounts of modern navigators. Even thoſe circumſtances, which, from their ſeeming improbability, have been produced to invalidate the credibility of his relation, tend to confirm it. He obſerves, that in the country to the ſouth of Cerne, a profound ſilence reigned through the day; but during the night, innumerable fires were kindled along the banks of the rivers, and the air reſounded with the noiſe of pipes and drums, and cries of joy. The ſame thing, as Ramuſio obſerves, ſtill takes place. The exceſſive heat obliges the negroes to take ſhelter in the woods, or in their houſes, during the day. As ſoon as the ſun ſets, they ſally out, and by torch-light enjoy the pleaſure of muſic and dancing, in which they ſpend the night.

Ramuſ.

Ramuſ. i. 113, F. In another place, he mentions the ſea as burning with torrents of fire. What occurred to M. Adanſon, on the ſame coaſt, may explain this. "As ſoon," ſays he, "as the ſun dipped beneath the horizon, and night overſpread the earth with darkneſs, the ſea lent us its friendly light. While the prow of our veſſel ploughed the foaming ſurges, it ſeemed to ſet them all on fire. Thus we ſailed in a luminous incloſure, which ſurrounded us like a large circle of rays, from whence darted in the wake of the ſhip a long ſtream of light." Voy. to Senegal, p. 176.

NOTE III. p. 11.

LONG after the navigation of the Phenicians and of Eudoxus round Africa, Polybius, the moſt intelligent and beſt informed hiſtorian of antiquity, affirms, that it was not known, in his time, whether Africa was a continued continent, ſtretching to the ſouth, or whether it was encompaſſed by the ſea. Polybii Hiſt. lib. iii. Pliny the naturaliſt aſſerts, that there can be no communication between the ſouthern and northern temperate zones. Plinii Hiſt. Natur. Edit. in uſum Delph. 4to, lib. ii. c. 68. If they had given full credit to the accounts of thoſe voyages, the former could not have entertained ſuch a doubt, the latter could not have delivered ſuch an opinion. Strabo mentions the voyage of Eudoxus, but treats it as a fabulous tale, lib. ii. p. 155; and, according to his account, no other judgment can be formed with reſpect to it. Strabo ſeems not to have known any thing with certainty concerning the form and ſtate of the ſouthern parts of Africa. Geogr. lib. xvii. p. 1180. Ptolemy, the moſt inquiſitive and learned of all the ancient geographers, was equally unacquainted with any part of Africa ſituated a few degrees beyond the equinoctial line; for he ſuppoſes that this great continent was not ſurrounded by the ſea, but that it ſtretched, without interruption, towards the ſouth pole: and he ſo far miſtakes its true figure, that he deſcribes the continent as becoming broader and broader as it advanced towards the ſouth. Ptolemæi Geogr. lib. iv. c. 9. Brietii Parlallela Geogr. veteris et novæ, p. 86.

NOTE IV. p. 16.

A FACT, recorded by Strabo, affords a very ſtrong and ſingular proof of the ignorance of the ancients with reſpect to the ſituation of the various parts of the earth. When Alexander marched along the banks of the Hydaſpes and Aceſine, two of the rivers which fall into the Indus, he obſerved that there were many crocodiles in thoſe rivers, and that the country produced beans of the ſame ſpecies with thoſe which were common in Egypt. From theſe circumſtances, he concluded that he had diſcovered the ſource of the Nile, and prepared a fleet to ſail down the Hydaſpes to Egypt. Strab. Geogr. lib. xv. p. 1020. This amazing error did not ariſe from any ignorance of geography peculiar to that monarch; for we are informed by Strabo, that Alexander applied with particular attention in order to acquire the knowledge of this ſcience, and had accurate maps or deſcriptions of the countries through which he marched. Lib. ii. p. 120. But in his age, the knowledge of the Greeks did not extend beyond the limits of the Mediterranean.

NOTE V. p. 17.

AS the flux and reflux of the ſea is remarkably great at the mouth of the river Indus, this would render the phenomenon more formidable to the Greeks. Varen. Geogr. vol. i. p. 251.

NOTE VI. p. 20.

IT is probable that they were ſeldom induced to advance ſo far, either by motives of curioſity, or views of commercial advantage. In conſequence of this, the idea of the ancients concerning the poſition of that great river was very erroneous. Ptolemy places that branch of the Ganges which he diſtinguiſhes by the name of the Great Mouth, in the Hundred and forty-ſixth degree of longitude from his firſt meridian in the Fortitude iſlands. But its

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true longitude, computed from that meridian, is now determined by aſtronomical obſervations to be only a hundred and five degrees. A geographer ſo eminent muſt have been betrayed into an error of this magnitude by the imperfection of the information which he had received concerning thoſe diſtant regions; and this affords a ſtriking proof of the intercourſe with them being extremely rare. With reſpect to the countries of India beyond the Ganges, his intelligence was ſtill more defective, and his errors more enormous. I ſhall have occaſion to obſerve in another place, that he has placed the country of the Seres, or China, no leſs than ſixty degrees farther eaſt than its true poſition. M. d'Anville, one of the moſt learned and inquiſitive of the modern geographers, has ſet this matter in a clear light, in two diſſertations publiſhed in Mem. de l'Academ. des Inſcript. &c. tom. xxxii. p. 573. 604.

NOTE VII. p. 20.

IT is remarkable, that the diſcoveries of the ancients were made chiefly by land; thoſe of the moderns are made chiefly by ſea. The progreſs of conqueſt led to the former, that of commerce to the latter. It is a judicious obſervation of Strabo, that the conqueſts of Alexander the Great made known the Eaſt, thoſe of the Romans opened the Weſt, and thoſe of Mithridates king of Pontus the North. Lib. i. p. 26. When diſcovery is carried on by land alone, its progreſs muſt be ſlow, and its operations confined. When it is carried on only by ſea, its ſphere may be more extenſive, and its advances more rapid; but it labours under peculiar defects. Though it may make known the poſition of different countries, and aſcertain their boundaries as far as theſe are determined by the ocean, it leaves us in ignorance with reſpect to their interior ſtate. Above two centuries and a half have elapſed ſince the Europeans ſailed round the ſouthern promontory of Africa, and have traded in moſt of its ports; but, in a conſiderable part of that great continent, they have done little more than ſurvey its coaſts, and mark its capes and harbours. Its interior regions are in a great

great meaſure unknown. The ancients, who had a very imperfect knowledge of its coaſts, except where they are waſhed by the Mediterranean or Red Sea, were accuſtomed to penetrate into its inland provinces, and, if we may rely on the teſtimony of Herodotus and Diodorus Siculus, had explored many parts of it now altogether unknown. Unleſs both modes of diſcovery be united, the geographical knowledge of the earth muſt remain incomplete and inaccurate.

NOTE VIII. p. 23.

THE notion of the ancients concerning ſuch an exceſſive degree of heat in the torrid zone, as rendered it uninhabitable, and their perſiſting in this error long after they began to have ſome commercial intercourſe with ſeveral parts of India lying within the tropics, muſt appear ſo ſingular and abſurd, that it may not be unacceptable to ſome of my readers to produce evidence of their holding this opinion, and to account for the apparent inconſiſtence of their theory with their experience. Cicero, who had beſtowed attention upon every part of philoſophy known to the ancients, ſeems to have believed that the torrid zone was uninhabitable, and, of conſequence, that there could be no intercourſe between the northern and ſouthern temperate zones. He introduces Africanus thus addreſſing the younger Scipio: "You ſee this earth encompaſſed and bound in by certain girdles, of which, two, at the greateſt diſtance from each other, and ſuſtaining the oppoſite poles of heaven, are frozen with perpetual cold; the middle one, and the largeſt of all, is burnt with the heat of the ſun; two are habitable, the people in the ſouthern one are antipodes to us, with whom we have no connection." *Somnium Scipionis*, c. 6. Geminus, a Greek philoſopher, contemporary with Cicero, delivers the ſame doctrine, not in a popular work, but in his Εισαγωγη εις φαινομενα, a treatiſe purely ſcientific. "When we ſpeak," ſays he, "of the ſouthern temperate zone, and its inhabitants, and concerning thoſe who are called antipodes, it muſt be always underſtood, that we have no certain knowledge or information concerning the ſouthern temperate zone, whether it be

be inhabited or not. But from the ſpherical figure of the earth, and the courſe which the ſun holds between the tropics, we conclude that there is another zone, ſituated to the ſouth, which enjoys the ſame degree of temperature with the northern one which we inhabit." Cap. xiii. p. 31. ap. Petavii Opus de Doctr. Tempor. in quo Uranologium ſive Syſtemata var. Auctorum. Amſt. 1705. vol. iii. The opinion of Pliny the naturaliſt, with reſpect to both theſe points, was the ſame: "There are five diviſions of the earth, which are called zones. All that portion which lies near to the two oppoſite poles is oppreſſed with vehement cold, and eternal froſt. There, unbleſt with the aſpect of milder ſtars, perpetual darkneſs reigns, or at the utmoſt a feeble light reflected from ſurrounding ſnows. The middle of the earth, in which is the orbit of the ſun, is ſcorched and burnt up with flames and fiery vapour. Between theſe torrid and frozen diſtricts lie two other portions of the earth, which are temperate; but, on account of the burning region interpoſed, there can be no communication between them. Thus Heaven has deprived us of three parts of the earth." Lib. ii. c. 68. Strabo delivers his opinion to the ſame effect, in terms no leſs explicit; "The portion of the earth which lies near the equator, in the torrid zone, is rendered uninhabitable by heat." Lib. ii. p. 154. To theſe I might add the authority of many other reſpectable philoſophers and hiſtorians of antiquity.

In order to explain the ſenſe in which this doctrine was generally received, we may obſerve, that Parmenides, as we are informed by Strabo, was the firſt who divided the earth into five zones, and he extended the limits of the zone, which he ſuppoſed to be uninhabitable on account of heat, beyond the tropics. Ariſtotle, as we learn likewiſe from Strabo, fixed the boundaries of the different zones in the ſame manner as they are defined by modern geographers. But the progreſs of diſcovery having gradually demonſtrated that ſeveral regions of the earth which lay within the tropics were not only habitable, but populous and fertile, this induced later geographers to circumſcribe the limits of the torrid zone. It is not eaſy to aſcertain with preciſion the boundaries which they allotted to it. From a paſſage

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in Strabo, who, as far as I know, is the only author of antiquity from whom we receive any hint concerning this ſubject, I ſhould conjecture, that thoſe who calculated according to the meaſurement of the earth by Eratoſthenes, ſuppoſed the torrid zone to comprehend near ſixteen degrees, about eight on each ſide of the equator; whereas ſuch as followed the computation of Poſidonius allotted about twenty-four degrees, or ſomewhat more than twelve degrees on each ſide of the equator to the torrid zone. Strabo, lib. ii. p. 151. According to the former opinion, about two-thirds of that portion of the earth which lies between the tropics was conſidered as habitable; according to the latter, about one-half of it. With this reſtriction, the doctrine of the ancients concerning the torrid zone appears leſs abſurd; and we can conceive the reaſon of their aſſerting this zone to be uninhabitable, even after they had opened a communication with ſeveral places within the tropics. When men of ſcience ſpoke of the torrid zone, they conſidered it as it was limited by the definition of geographers to ſixteen, or at the utmoſt to twenty-four degrees; and as they knew almoſt nothing of the countries nearer to the equator, they might ſtill ſuppoſe them to be uninhabitable. In looſe and popular diſcourſe, the name of the torrid zone continued to be given to all that portion of the earth which lies within the tropics. Cicero ſeems to have been unacquainted with the ideas of later geographers, and according to the diviſion of Parmenides, deſcribes the torrid zone as the largeſt of the five. Some of the ancients rejected the notion concerning the intolerable heat of the torrid zone as a popular error. This, we are told by Plutarch, was the ſentiment of Pythagoras, and we learn from Strabo, that Eratoſthenes and Polybius had adopted the ſame opinion, lib. ii. 154. Ptolemy ſeems to have paid no regard to the ancient doctrine and opinions concerning the torrid zone.

NOTE IX. p. 42.

THE court of inquiſition, which effectually checks a ſpirit of liberal inquiry, and of literary improvement, wherever it is eſtabliſhed, was firſt introduced into Portugal by John III. who began his reign, A. D. 1521.

NOTE X. p. 49.

AN inſtance of this is related by Hackluyt, upon the authority of the Portugueſe hiſtorian Garcia de Reſende. Some Engliſh merchants having reſolved to open a trade with the coaſt of Guinea, John II. of Portugal diſpatched ambaſſadors to Edward IV. in order to lay before him the right which he had acquired by the Pope's bull to the dominion of that country, and to requeſt of him to prohibit his ſubjects to proſecute their intended voyage. Edward was ſo much ſatisfied with the excluſive title of the Portugueſe, that he iſſued his orders in the terms which they deſired. Hackluyt, Navigations, Voyages, and Trafficks of the Engliſh, vol. ii. part ii. p. 2.

NOTE XI. p. 59.

THE time of Columbus's birth may be nearly aſcertained by the following circumſtances. It appears from the fragment of a letter, addreſſed by him to Ferdinand and Iſabella, A. D. 1501, that he had, at that time, been engaged forty years in a ſea-faring life. In another letter, he informs them, that he went to ſea at the age of fourteen; from thoſe facts it follows, that he was born A. D. 1447. Life of Chriſt. Columbus, by his ſon Don Ferdinand. Churchill's Collection of Voyages, vol. ii. p. 484, 485.

NOTE XII. p. 65.

THE ſpherical figure of the earth was known to the ancient geographers. They invented the method, ſtill in uſe, of computing the longitude and latitude of different places. According to their doctrine, the equator or imaginary line which encompaſſes the earth contained three hundred and ſixty degrees; theſe they divided into twenty-four parts, or hours, each equal to fifteen degrees. The country of the *Seres* or *Sinæ* being the fartheſt part of India known to the ancients, was ſuppoſed, by Marinus Tyrius, the moſt eminent of the ancient geographers before Ptolemy, to be fifteen hours, or two hundred and twenty-five degrees to the eaſt of the firſt meridian, paſſing thro' the Fortunate Iſlands. Ptolemæi Geogr. lib. i. c. 11. If this ſuppoſition was well-founded, the country of the Seres, or China, was only nine hours, or one hundred and thirty-five degrees weſt from the Fortunate, or Canary Iſlands; and the navigation, in that direction, was much ſhorter than by the courſe which the Portugueze were purſuing. Marco Polo, in his travels, had deſcribed countries, particularly the Iſland of Cipango or Zipangri, ſuppoſed to be Japan, conſiderably to the eaſt of any part of Aſia, known to the ancients. Marcus Paulus de Region. Oriental. lib. ii. c. 70. lib. iii. c. 2. Of courſe, this country, as it extended further to the eaſt, was ſtill nearer to the Canary Iſlands. The concluſions of Columbus, though drawn from inaccurate obſervations, were juſt. If the ſuppoſitions of Marinus had been well founded, and if the countries, which Marco Polo viſited, had been ſituated to the eaſt of thoſe whoſe longitude Marinus had aſcertained, the proper and neareſt courſe to the Eaſt Indies muſt have been to ſteer directly weſt. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. i. c. 2. A more extenſive knowledge of the globe has now diſcovered the great error of Marinus, in ſuppoſing China to be fifteen hours, or two hundred and twenty-five degrees eaſt from the Canary Iſlands, and that even Ptolemy was miſtaken, when he reduced the longitude of China to twelve hours, or one hundred and eighty degrees. The longitude

longitude of the weſtern frontier of that vaſt empire is ſeven hours, or one hundred and fifteen degrees from the meridian of the Canary Iſlands. But Columbus followed the light which his age afforded, and relied upon the authority of writers, who were, at that time, regarded as the inſtructors and guides of mankind in the ſcience of geography.

NOTE XIII. p. 86.

AS the Portugueze, in making their diſcoveries, did not depart far from the coaſt of Africa, they concluded that birds, whoſe flight they obſerved with great attention, did not venture to any conſiderable diſtance from land. In the infancy of navigation, it was not known, that birds often ſtretch their flight at an immenſe diſtance from any land. In ſailing towards the Weſt-Indian Iſlands, birds are often ſeen at the diſtance of two hundred leagues from any land. Sloane's Nat. Hiſt. of Jamaica, vol. i. p. 30. Cateſby ſaw an owl at ſea, when the ſhip was ſix hundred leagues diſtant from land. Nat. Hiſt. of Carolina, pref. p. 7. Hiſt. Naturelle de M. de Buffon, tom. xvi. p. 32. From which it appears, that this indication of land, on which Columbus ſeems to have relied with ſome confidence, was extremely uncertain.

NOTE XIV. p. 96.

IN a letter of the admiral's to Ferdinand and Iſabella, he deſcribes one of the harbours in Cuba with all the enthuſiaſtic admiration of a diſcoverer. — "I diſcovered a river which a galley might eaſily enter; the beauty of it induced me to ſound, and I found from five to eight fathoms of water. Having proceeded a conſiderable way up the river, every thing invited me to ſettle there. The beauty of the river, the clearneſs of the water, through which I could ſee the ſandy bottom, the multitude of palm-trees of different kinds, the talleſt and fineſt I had ſeen, and an infinite number of other large and flouriſhing trees, the birds, and the verdure of the plains, are ſo wonderfully beautiful,

beautiful, that this country excels all others as far as the day ſurpaſſes the night in brightneſs and ſplendour, ſo that I often ſaid, that it would be in vain for me to attempt to give your highneſſes a full account of it, for neither my tongue nor my pen could come up to the truth, and indeed I am ſo much amazed at the ſight of ſuch beauty, that I know not how to deſcribe it." Life of Columbus, c. 30.

NOTE XV. p. 100.

THE account which Columbus gives of the humanity and orderly behaviour of the natives on this occaſion is very ſtriking. "The king (ſays he, in a letter to Ferdinand and Iſabella) having been informed of our misfortune, expreſſed great grief for our loſs, and immediately ſent aboard all the people in the place in many large canoes; we ſoon unloaded the ſhip of every thing that was upon deck, as the king gave us great aſſiſtance, he himſelf, with his brothers and relations, took all poſſible care that every thing ſhould be properly done both aboard and on ſhore. And, from time to time, he ſent ſome of his relations weeping, to beg of me not to be dejected, for he would give me all that he had. I can aſſure your highneſſes, that there would not have been ſo much care taken in ſecuring our effects in any part of Spain, as all our property was put together in one place near his palace, until the houſes which he wanted to prepare for the cuſtody of it were emptied. He immediately placed a guard of armed men, who watched during the whole night, and thoſe on ſhore lamented as if they had been much intereſted in our loſs. The people are ſo affectionate, ſo tractable, and ſo peaceable, that I ſwear to your highneſſes, that there is not a better race of men, nor a better country in the world. They love their neighbour as themſelves; their converſation is the ſweeteſt and mildeſt in the world, cheerful, and always accompanied with a ſmile. And although it is true that they go naked, yet your highneſſes may be aſſured that they have many very commendable cuſtoms; the king is ſerved with great ſtate, and

and his behaviour is so decent, that it is pleasant to see him, as it is likewise to observe the wonderful memory which these people have, and their desire of knowing every thing, which leads them to inquire into its causes and effects." Life of Columbus, c. 32. It is probable that the Spaniards were indebted for this officious attention to the opinion which the Indians entertained of them as a superior order of beings.

NOTE XVI. p. 106.

EVERY monument of such a man as Columbus is valuable. A letter which he wrote to Ferdinand and Isabella, describing what passed on this occasion, exhibits a most striking picture of his intrepidity, his humanity, his prudence, his public spirit, and courtly address. "I would have been less concerned for this misfortune, had I alone been in danger, both because my life is a debt that I owe to the Supreme Creator, and because I have at other times been exposed to the most imminent hazard. But what gave me infinite grief and vexation was, that after it had pleased our Lord to give me faith to undertake this enterprize, in which I had now been so successful, that my opponent would have been convinced, and the glory of your highnesses, and the extent of your territory increased by me; it should please the Divine Majesty to stop all by my death. All this would have been more tolerable, had it not been attended with the loss of those men whom I had carried with me, upon promise of the greatest prosperity, who seeing themselves in such distress, cursed not only their coming along with me, but that fear and awe for me, which prevented them from returning as they often had resolved to have done. But besides all this, my sorrow was greatly increased, by recollecting that I had left my two sons at school at Cordova, destitute of friends, in a foreign country, when it could not in all probability be known that I had done such services as might induce your highnesses to remember them. And though I comforted myself with the faith that our Lord would not permit that

which tended ſo much to the glory of his church, and which I had brought about with ſo much trouble, to remain imperfect, yet I conſidered that, on account of my ſins, it was his will to deprive me of that glory which I might have attained in this world. While in this confuſed ſtate, I thought on the good fortune which accompanies your highneſſes, and imagined, that although I ſhould periſh, and the veſſel be loſt, it was poſſible that you might ſomehow come to the knowledge of my voyage, and the ſucceſs with which it was attended. For that reaſon I wrote upon parchment with the brevity which the ſituation required, that I had diſcovered the lands which I promiſed, in how many days I had done it, and what courſe I had followed. I mentioned the goodneſs of the country, the character of the inhabitants, and that your highneſſes ſubjects were left in poſſeſſion of all that I had diſcovered. Having ſealed this writing, I addreſſed it to your highneſſes, and promiſed a thouſand ducats to any perſon who ſhould deliver it ſealed, ſo that if any foreigners found it, the promiſed reward might prevail on them not to give the information to another. I then cauſed a great caſk to be brought to me, and wrapping up the parchment in an oiled cloth, and afterwards in a cake of wax, I put it into the caſk, and having ſtopt it well, I caſt it into the ſea. All the men believed that it was ſome act of devotion. Imagining that this might never chance to be taken up, as the ſhips approached nearer to Spain, I made another packet like the firſt, and placed it at the top of the poop, ſo that if the ſhip ſunk, the caſk remaining above water might be committed to the guidance of fortune."

NOTE XVII. p. 110.

SOME Spaniſh authors, with the meanneſs of national jealouſy, have endeavoured to detract from the glory of Columbus, by inſinuating that he was led to the diſcovery of the New World, not by his own inventive, or enterprizing genius, but by information which he had received. According to their account, a veſſel having been driven from

from its courſe by eaſterly winds was carried before them far to the weſt, and landed on the coaſt of an unknown country, from which it returned with difficulty; the pilot, and three ſailors, being the only perſons of the crew that ſurvived the diſtreſſes which they ſuffered, from want of proviſions, and fatigue in this long voyage. In a few days after their arrival, all the four died; but the pilot having been received into the houſe of Columbus, his intimate friend, diſcloſed to him, before his death, the ſecret of the diſcovery which he had accidentally made, and left him his papers containing a journal of the voyage, which ſerved as a guide to Columbus in his undertaking. Gomara, as far as I know, is the firſt author who publiſhed this ſtory, Hiſt. c. 13. Every circumſtance is deſtitute of evidence to ſupport it. Neither the name of the veſſel nor its deſtination is known. Some pretend that it belonged to one of the ſea-port towns in Andaluſia, and was ſailing either to the Canaries, or to Madeira; others, that it was a Biſcayner in its way to England; others, a Portugueze ſhip trading on the coaſt of Guinea. The name of the pilot is alike unknown, as well as that of the port in which he landed on his return. According to ſome, it was in Portugal; according to others, in Madeira, or the Azores. The year in which this voyage was made is no leſs uncertain. Monſon's Nav. Tracts. Churchill, iii. 371. No mention is made of this pilot, or his diſcoveries, by And. Bernaldes, or Pet. Martyr, the contemporaries of Columbus. Herrera, with his uſual judgment, paſſes over it in ſilence. Oviedo takes notice of this report, but conſiders it as a tale fit only to amuſe the vulgar. Hiſt. lib. ii. c. 2. As Columbus held his courſe directly weſt from the Canaries, and never varied it, ſome later authors have ſuppoſed, that this uniformity is a proof of his being guided by ſome previous information. But they do not recollect the principles on which he founded all his hopes of ſucceſs, that by holding a weſterly courſe, he muſt certainly arrive at thoſe regions of the eaſt deſcribed by the antients. His firm belief of his own ſyſtem led him to take that courſe, and to purſue it without deviation.

OTHER nations, beſides the Spaniards, have called in queſtion Columbus's claim to the honour of having diſcovered America. Some German authors aſcribe it to Martin Behaim, whom they ſuppoſe to be their countryman. But they mention neither the year in which he made the diſcovery, nor the place from which he ſailed, nor one circumſtance of the voyage. Jo. Frid. Stuvenius, in a Diſſertation de vero Novi Orbis Inventore, publiſhed at Francfort in the year 1714, warmly aſſerts the title of Behaim, but without producing in confirmation of it, any thing that has even the ſhadow of evidence. There was indeed a Martin de Boemia, a noted coſmographer in the fifteenth century, whom Herrera mentions as a friend to Columbus, dec. 1. lib. i. c. 2. but he aſſures us that he was born a Portugueze, and born in the iſland of Fayal, one of the Azores. Ibid. and dec. 2. lib. ii. c. 19. Gomara informs us, that Magellan was poſſeſſed of a terreſtrial globe, made by this Martin de Boemia, on which he demonſtrated the courſe he purpoſed to hold, in ſearching for that ſtrait which he afterwards diſcovered. Hiſt. c. 19. It ſeems probable, then, that the Germans have been induced, merely by the name of this artiſt, to ſuppoſe him a native of Bohemia, and on that ſuppoſition, have raiſed their imaginary pretenſions.

THOSE of the Welſh ſeem not to reſt on a foundation much more ſolid. In the twelfth century, according to Powell, a diſpute having ariſen among the ſons of Owen Guynoth, king of North-Wales, concerning the ſucceſſion to his crown, Madoc, one of their number, weary of this contention, betook himſelf to ſea in queſt of a more quiet ſettlement. He ſteered due weſt, leaving Ireland to the north, and arrived in an unknown country, which appeared to him ſo deſirable, that he returned to Wales, and carried thither ſeveral of his adherents and companions. This is ſaid to have happened about the year 1170, and after that, he and his colony were heard of no more. But it is to be obſerved, that Powell, on whoſe teſtimony the authenticity of this ſtory reſts, publiſhed his hiſtory above four centuries from the date of the event which he relates. Among a people ſo rude and ſo illiterate as

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the Welſh, at that period, the memory of a tranſaction ſo remote muſt have been very imperfectly preſerved, and would require to be confirmed by ſome author of greater credit, and nearer to the æra of Madoc's voyage than Powell. Later antiquaries have indeed appealed to the teſtimony of Meredith ap Rhees, a Welſh bard, who died A. D. 1477. But he too lived at ſuch a diſtance of time from the event, that he cannot be conſidered as a witneſs of much more credit than Powell. Beſides, his verſes publiſhed by Hakluyt, vol. iii. p. 1. convey no information, but that Madoc, diſſatisfied with his domeſtic ſituation, employed himſelf in ſearching the ocean for new poſſeſſions. But even if we admit the authenticity of Powell's ſtory, it does not follow that the unknown country which Madoc diſcovered by ſteering weſt, in ſuch a courſe as to leave Ireland to the north, was any part of America. The ſkill of the Welſh in the twelfth century was hardly equal to ſuch a voyage. If he made any diſcovery at all, it more probably might be Madeira, or ſome other of the weſtern iſles. The affinity of the Welſh language with ſome dialects ſpoken in America, has been mentioned as a circumſtance which confirms the truth of Madoc's voyage. But that has been obſerved in ſo few inſtances, and in ſome of theſe the affinity is ſo obſcure, or ſo fanciful, that no concluſion can be drawn from the caſual reſemblance of a ſmall number of words. There is a bird, which as far as is yet known, is found only on the coaſts of South America, from Port Deſire to the Straits of Magellan. It is diſtinguiſhed by the name of *Penguin*. This word in the Welſh language ſignifies *White-head*. All the authors who favour the pretenſions of the Welſh to the diſcovery of America, mention this as an irrefragable proof of the affinity of the Welſh language with that ſpoken in that region of America. But Mr. Pennant, who has given a ſcientific deſcription of the Penguin, obſerves, that all the birds of that genus have black heads, "ſo that we muſt reſign every hope (adds he) founded on this hypotheſis of retrieving the Cambrian race in the New World." Philoſ. Tranſact. vol. lviii. p. 91, &c. Beſide this, if the Welſh, towards the cloſe of the twelfth century, had ſettled in any part of America, ſome remains of the

Chriſtian doctrine and rites muſt have been found among their deſcendants, when they were diſcovered about three hundred years poſterior to their migration, a period ſo ſhort, that, in the courſe of it, we cannot well ſuppoſe that all European ideas and arts would be totally forgotten.

THE pretenſions of the Norwegians to the diſcovery of America, ſeem to be better founded than thoſe of the Germans or Welſh. The inhabitants of Scandinavia were remarkable in the middle ages for the boldneſs and extent of their maritime excurſions. In 874, the Norwegians diſcovered and planted a colony in Iceland. In 982, they diſcovered Greenland, and eſtabliſhed ſettlements there. From that, ſome of their navigators proceeded towards the weſt, and diſcovered a country more inviting than thoſe horrid regions with which they are acquainted. According to their repreſentation, this country was ſandy on the coaſts, but in the interior parts level and covered with wood, on which account they gave it the name of *Helle-land*, and *Mark-land*, and having afterwards found ſome plants of the vine which bore grapes, they called it *Win-land*. The credit of this ſtory reſts, as far as I know, on the authority of the *ſaga*, or chronicle of king Olaus, compoſed by Snorro Sturlonides, or *Sturluſons*, publiſhed by Perinſkiold at Stockholm A. D. 1697. As Snorro was born in the year 1179, his chronicle might be compiled about two centuries after the event which he relates. His account of the navigation and diſcoveries of *Biorn*, and his companion *Lief*, is a very rude confuſed tale, p. 104. 110. 326. It is impoſſible to diſcover from him, what part of America it was in which the Norwegians landed. According to his account of the length of the days and nights, it muſt have been as far north as the fifty-eighth degree of latitude, on ſome part of the coaſt of Labradore, approaching near to the entry of Hudſon's Straits. Grapes, certainly, are not the production of that country. Torfeus ſuppoſes that there is an error in the text, by rectifying of which, the place where the Norwegians landed may be ſuppoſed to be ſituated in latitude 49°. But that is not the region of the vine in America. From peruſing Snorro's

Snorro's tale, I ſhould think that the ſituation of Newfoundland correſponds beſt with that of the country diſcovered by the Norwegians. But grapes are not the production of that barren iſland. Other conjectures are mentioned by M. Mallet, Introd. a l'Hiſt. de Dannem, 175, &c. I am not ſufficiently acquainted with the literature of the north, to examine them. It ſeems manifeſt, that if the Norwegians did diſcover any part of America at that period, their attempts to plant colonies proved unſucceſsful, and all knowledge of it was ſoon loſt.

NOTE XVIII. p. 111.

PETER MARTYR, ab Angleria, a Milaneſe gentleman, who reſided at that time in the court of Spain, whoſe letters contain an account of the tranſactions of that period, in the order wherein they occurred, deſcribes the ſentiments with which he himſelf and his learned correſpondents were affected, in very ſtriking terms. "Præ lætitia proſiluiſſe te, vixque a lachrymis præ gaudio temperaſſe, quando literas adſpexiſti meas quibus, de antipodum orbe latenti hactenus, te certiorem feci, mi ſuaviſſime Pomponi, inſinuaſti. Ex tuis ipſe literis colligo, quid ſenſeris. Senſiſti autem, tantique rem feciſti, quanti virum ſumma doctrina inſignitum decuit. Quis namque cibus ſublimibus præſtari poteſt ingeniis, iſto ſuavior? quod condimentum gratius? A me facio conjecturam. Beati ſentio ſpiritus meos, quando accitos alloquor prudentes aliquos ex his qui ab ea redeunt provincia. Implicent animos pecuniarum cumulis augendis miſeri avari, libidinibus obſcœni; noſtras nos mentes, poſtquam Deo pleni aliquando fuerimus, contemplando, hujuſcemodi rerum notitia demulciamus." Epiſt. 152. Pomponio Læto.

NOTE XIX. p. 122.

SO firmly were men of ſcience, in that age, perſuaded that the countries which Columbus had diſcovered were connected with the Eaſt-Indies, that Bernaldes, the curate of

Los Palacios, who ſeems to have been no inconſiderable proficient in the knowledge of coſmography, contends that Cuba was not an iſland, but a part of the continent, and united to the dominions of the Great Khan. This he delivered as his opinion to Columbus himſelf, who was his gueſt for ſome time on his return from his ſecond voyage; and he ſupports it by ſeveral arguments, moſtly founded on the authority of Sir John Mandeville, MS. *penes me*. Antonio Gallo, who was ſecretary to the magiſtracy of Genoa towards the cloſe of the fifteenth century, publiſhed a ſhort account of the navigations and diſcoveries of his countryman Columbus, annexed to his Opuſcula Hiſtorica de rebus populi Genuenſis; in which he informs us, from letters of Columbus which he himſelf had ſeen, that it was his opinion, founded upon nautical obſervations, that one of the iſlands he had diſcovered was diſtant only two hours or thirty degrees from Cattigara, which, in the charts of the geographers of that age, was laid down, upon the authority of Ptolemy, lib. vii. c. 3. as the moſt eaſterly place in Aſia. From this he concluded, that if ſome unknown continent did not obſtruct the navigation, there muſt be a ſhort and eaſy acceſs, by holding a weſterly courſe, to this extreme region of the Eaſt. Muratori Scriptores Rer. Italicarum, vol. xxiii. p. 304.

NOTE XX. p. 127.

BERNALDES, the curate de los Palacios, a contemporary writer, ſays, that five hundred of theſe captives were ſent to Spain, and ſold publicly in Seville as ſlaves; but that, by the change of climate, and their inability to bear the fatigue of labour, they all died in a ſhort time. MS. *penes me*.

NOTE XXI. p. 139.

COLUMBUS ſeems to have formed ſome very ſingular opinions concerning the countries which he had now diſcovered. The violent ſwell and agitation of the waters on the coaſt of

of Trinidad led him to conclude, that this was the higheſt part of the terraqueous globe, and he imagined that various circumſtances concurred in proving that the ſea was here viſibly elevated. Having adopted this erroneous principle, the apparent beauty of the country induced him to fall in with a notion of Sir John Mandeville, c. 102. that the terreſtrial paradiſe was the higheſt land in the earth; and he believed that he had been ſo fortunate as to diſcover this happy abode. Nor ought we to think it ſtrange that a perſon of ſo much ſagacity ſhould be influenced by the opinion or reports of ſuch a fabulous author as Mandeville. Columbus and the other diſcoverers were obliged to follow ſuch guides as they could find; and it appears from ſeveral paſſages in the manuſcript of Andr. Bernaldes, the friend of Columbus, that no inconſiderable degree of credit was given to the teſtimony of Mandeville in that age. Bernaldes frequently quotes him, and always with reſpect.

NOTE XXII. p. 150.

IT is remarkable, that neither Gomara or Oviedo, the moſt ancient Spaniſh hiſtorians of America, nor Herrera, conſider Hojeda, or his companion Veſpucci, as the firſt diſcoverers of the continent of America. They uniformly aſcribe this honour to Columbus. Some have ſuppoſed that national reſentment againſt Veſpucci, for deſerting the ſervice of Spain, and entering into that of Portugal, may have prompted theſe writers to conceal the actions which he performed. But Martyr and Benzoni, both Italians, could not be warped by the ſame prejudice. Martyr was a contemporary author; he reſided in the court of Spain, and had the beſt opportunity to be exactly informed with reſpect to all public tranſactions; and yet, neither in his Decads, the firſt general hiſtory publiſhed of the New World, nor in his Epiſtles, which contain an account of all the remarkable events of his time, does he aſcribe to Veſpucci the honour of having firſt diſcovered the continent. Benzoni went as an adventurer to America in the year 1541, and reſided there a conſiderable time. He appears to have been animated with a warm zeal for the honour

honour of Italy, his native country, and yet does not mention the exploits and diſcoveries of Veſpucci. Herrera, who compiled his general hiſtory of America from the moſt authentic records, not only follows thoſe early writers, but accuſes Veſpucci of falſifying the dates of both the voyages which he made to the New World, and of confounding the one with the other, in order that he might arrogate to himſelf the glory of having diſcovered the continent. Her. dec. 1. lib. iv. c. 2. He aſſerts, that in a judicial inquiry into this matter by the royal fiſcal, it was proved by the teſtimony of Hojeda himſelf, that he touched at Hiſpaniola when returning to Spain from his firſt voyage; whereas Veſpucci gave out that they returned directly to Cadiz from the coaſt of Paria, and touched at Hiſpaniola only in their ſecond voyage; and that he had finiſhed the voyage in five months; whereas, according to Veſpucci's account, he had employed ſeventeen months in performing it. Viaggio primo de Am. Veſpucci, p. 36. Viag. ſecundo, p. 45. Herrera gives a more full account of this inqueſt in another part of his book, and to the ſame effect. Her. dec. 1. lib. vii. c. 5. Columbus was in Hiſpaniola when Hojeda arrived there, and had by that time come to an agreement with Roldan, who oppoſed Hojeda's attempt to excite a new inſurrection, and, of conſequence, his voyage muſt have been poſterior to that of the admiral. Life of Columbus, c. 84. According to Veſpucci's account, he ſet out on his firſt voyage May 10th, 1497. Viag. primo, p. 6. At that time Columbus was in the court of Spain preparing for his voyage, and ſeems to have enjoyed a conſiderable degree of favour. The affairs of the New World were at this juncture under the direction of Antonio Torres, a friend of Columbus. It is not probable, that at that period a commiſſion would be granted to another perſon, to anticipate the admiral, by undertaking a voyage which he himſelf intended to perform. Fonſeca, who patronized Hojeda, and granted the licence for his voyage, was not recalled to court, and reinſtated in the direction of Indian affairs, until the death of prince John, which happened September 1497, P. Martyr, Ep. 182. ſeveral months poſterior to the time

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at which Veſpucci pretends to have ſet out upon his voyage. A life of Veſpucci was publiſhed at Florence by the Abate Bandini, A. D. 1745, 4to. It is a work of no merit, written with little judgment, and leſs candour. He contends for his countryman's title to the diſcovery of the continent with all the blind zeal of national partiality, but produces no new evidence to ſupport it. We learn from him, that Veſpucci's account of his voyage was publiſhed as early as the year 1510, and probably ſooner. Vita di Am. Veſp. p. 52. At what time the name of AMERICA came to be firſt given to the New World, is not certain.

NOTE XXIII. p. 192.

THE form employed on this occaſion ſerved as a model to the Spaniards in all their ſubſequent conqueſts in America. It is ſo extraordinary in its nature, and gives us ſuch an idea of the proceedings of the Spaniards, and the principles upon which they founded their right to the extenſive dominions which they acquired in the New World, that it well merits the attention of the reader. "I Alonſo de Hojeda, ſervant of the moſt high and powerful kings of Caſtile and Leon, the conquerors of barbarous nations, their meſſenger and captain, notify to you and declare, in as ample form as I am capable, that God our Lord, who is one and eternal, created the heaven and the earth, and one man and one woman, of whom you and we, and all the men who have been or ſhall be in the world, are deſcended. But as it has come to paſs, through the number of generations during more than five thouſand years, that they have been diſperſed into different parts of the world, and are divided into various kingdoms and provinces, becauſe one country was not able to contain them, nor could they have found in one the means of ſubſiſtence and preſervation; therefore God our Lord gave the charge of all thoſe people to one man, named St. Peter, whom he conſtituted the lord and head of all the human race, that all men, in whatever place they are born, or in whatever faith or place they are educated, might yield obedience unto him. He hath

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ſubjected the whole world to his juriſdiction, and commanded him to eſtabliſh his reſidence in Rome, as the moſt proper place for the government of the world. He likewiſe promiſed and gave him power to eſtabliſh his authority in every other part of the world, and to judge and govern all Chriſtians, Moors, Jews, Gentiles, and all other people, of whatever ſect or faith they may be. To him is given the name of *Pope*, which ſignifies admirable, great father and guardian, becauſe he is the father and governor of all men. Thoſe who lived in the time of this holy father obeyed and acknowledged him as their lord and king, and the ſuperior of the univerſe. The ſame has been obſerved with reſpect to them who, ſince his time, have been choſen to the pontificate. Thus it now continues, and will continue to the end of the world.

"ONE of theſe pontiffs, as lord of the world, hath made a grant of theſe iſlands, and of the Terra Firma of the ocean ſea, to the Catholic kings of Caſtile, Don Ferdinand and Donna Iſabella, of glorious memory, and their ſucceſſors, our ſovereigns, with all they contain, as is more fully expreſſed in certain deeds paſſed upon that occaſion, which you may ſee if you deſire it. Thus his majeſty is king and lord of theſe iſlands, and of the Terra Firma, in virtue of this donation; and, as king and lord aforeſaid, moſt of the iſlands to which his title hath been notified, have recognized his majeſty, and now yield obedience and ſubjection to him as their lord, voluntarily and without reſiſtance; and inſtantly, as ſoon as they received information, they obeyed the religious men ſent by the king to preach to them, and to inſtruct them in our holy faith; and all theſe, of their own free-will, without any recompence or gratuity, became Chriſtians, and continue to be ſo; and his majeſty having received them graciouſly under his protection, has commanded that they ſhould be treated in the ſame manner as his other ſubjects and vaſſals. You are bound and obliged to act in the ſame manner. Therefore I now entreat and require you to conſider attentively what I have declared to you; and that you may more perfectly comprehend it, that you take

take ſuch time as is reaſonable, in order that you may acknowledge the Church as the ſuperior and guide of the univerſe, and likewiſe the holy father called the Pope, in his own right, and his majeſty by his appointment, as king and ſovereign lord of theſe iſlands, and of the Terra Firma; and that you conſent that the aforeſaid holy fathers ſhall declare and preach to you the doctrines above mentioned. If you do this, you act well, and perform that to which you are bound and obliged; and his majeſty, and I in his name, will receive you with love and kindneſs, and will leave you, your wives and children, free and exempt from ſervitude, and in the enjoyment of all you poſſeſs, in the ſame manner as the inhabitants of the iſlands. Beſides this, his majeſty will beſtow upon you many privileges, exemptions, and rewards. But if you will not comply, or maliciouſly delay to obey my injunction, then, with the help of God, I will enter your country by force, I will carry on war againſt you with the utmoſt violence, I will ſubject you to the yoke of obedience to the church and the king, I will take your wives and children, and will make them ſlaves, and ſell or diſpoſe of h em according to his majeſty's pleaſure; I will ſeize your goods, and do you all the miſchief in my power, as rebellious ſubjects, who will not acknowledge or ſubmit to their lawful ſovereign. And I proteſt, that all the bloodſhed and calamities which ſhall follow are to be imputed to you, and not to his majeſty, or to me, or the gentlemen who ſerve under me; and as I have now made this declaration and requiſition unto you, I require the notary here preſent to grant me a certificate of this, ſubſcribed in proper form." Herrera, dec. 1. lib. vii. c. 14.

NOTE XXIV. p. 205.

BALBOA, in his letter to the king, obſerves, that of the hundred and ninety men whom he took with him, there were never above eighty fit for ſervice at one time. So much did they ſuffer from hunger, fatigue, and ſickneſs. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. x. c. 16. P. Mart. decad. p. 226.

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NOTE XXV. p. 217.

FONSECA, biſhop of Palencia, the principal director of American affairs, had eight hundred Indians in property; the commendator Lope de Conchillos, his chief aſſociate in that department, eleven hundred; and other favourites had different numbers. They ſent overſeers to the iſlands, and hired out thoſe ſlaves to the planters. Herr. dec. 1. lib. ix. c. 14. p. 325.

NOTE XXVI. p. 239.

THOUGH America is more plentifully ſupplied with water than the other regions of the globe, there is no river or ſtream of water in Yucatan. This peninſula projects from the continent a hundred leagues, but, where broadeſt, does not extend above twenty-five leagues. It is a flat plain, without mountains. The inhabitants are ſupplied with water from pits, and wherever they dig them, find it in abundance. It is probable, from all thoſe circumſtances, that this country was formerly covered by the ſea. Herreræ Deſcriptio Indiæ Occidentalis, p. 14. Hiſtoire Naturelle, par M. de Buffon, tom. 1. p. 593.

NOTE XXVII. p. 249.

THE height of the moſt elevated point in the Pyrenees is, according to M. Caſſini, ſix thouſand ſix hundred and forty-ſix feet. The height of the mountain Gemmi, in the canton of Berne, is ten thouſand one hundred and ten feet. The height of the Pike of Teneriffe, according to the meaſurement of P. Feuillè, is thirteen thouſand one hundred and ſeventy-eight feet. The height of Chimborazo, the moſt elevated point of the Andes, is twenty thouſand two hundred and eighty feet. Voyage de D. Juan Ulloa, Obſervations Aſtron. et Phyſiq. tom. ii. p. 114. The height of that part of Chimborazo which

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is covered perpetually with ſnow, is two thouſand four hundred feet. Prevot. Hiſt. Gener. des Voyages, vol. xiii. p. 636.

NOTE XXVIII. p. 249.

AS a particular deſcription makes a ſtronger impreſſion than general aſſertions, I ſhall give one of Rio de la Plata by an eye-witneſs. P. Cattaneo, a Modeneſe jeſuit, landed at Buenos Ayres in 1749, and thus repreſents what he felt when ſuch new objects were firſt preſented to his view. "While I reſided in Europe, and read in books of hiſtory or geography that the mouth of the river De la Plata was an hundred and fifty miles in breadth, I conſidered it as an exaggeration, becauſe in this hemiſphere we have no example of ſuch vaſt rivers. When I approached its mouth, I had the moſt vehement deſire to aſcertain the truth with my own eyes, and I have found the matter to be exactly as it was repreſented. This I deduce particularly from one circumſtance: When we took our departure from Monte-Video, a fort ſituated more than a hundred miles from the mouth of the river, and where its breadth is conſiderably diminiſhed, we ſailed a complete day before we diſcovered the land on the oppoſite bank of the river; and when we were in the middle of the channel, we could not diſcern land on either ſide, and ſaw nothing but the ſky and water, as if we had been in ſome great ocean. Indeed, we ſhould have taken it to be ſea, if the freſh water of the river, which was turbid like the Po, had not ſatisfied us that it was a river. Moreover, at Buenos Ayres, another hundred miles up the river, and where it is ſtill much narrower, one cannot diſcern the oppoſite coaſt, which is indeed very low and flat; but one cannot perceive the houſes or the tops of the ſteeples in the Portugueſe ſettlement at Colonia on the other ſide of the river." Lettera prima, publiſhed by Muratori, Il Chriſtianeſimo Felicè, &c. i. p. 257.

NOTE

NOTE XXIX. p. 252.

NEWFOUNDLAND, part of Nova Scotia and Canada, are the countries which lie in the ſame parallel of latitude with the kingdom of France; and in all of them the water of the rivers is frozen during winter to the thickneſs of ſeveral feet; the earth is covered with ſnow as deep; almoſt all the birds fly, during that ſeaſon, from a climate where they could not live. The country of the Eſkimaux, part of Labrador, and the countries on the ſouth of Hudſon's Bay, are in the ſame parallel with Great Britain; and yet in all theſe the cold is ſo intenſe, that even the induſtry of Europeans has not attempted cultivation.

NOTE XXX. p. 254.

ACOSTA is the firſt philoſopher, as far as I know, who endeavoured to account for the different degrees of heat in the old and new continents, by the agency of the winds which blow in each. Hiſt. Moral. &c. lib. ii. & iii. M. de Buffon adopts this theory, and has not only improved it by new obſervations, but has employed his amazing powers of deſcriptive eloquence in embelliſhing and placing it in the moſt ſtriking light. Some remarks may be added, which tend to illuſtrate more fully a doctrine of much importance in every inquiry concerning the temperature of various climates.

WHEN a cold wind blows over land it muſt in its paſſage rob the ſurface of ſome of its heat. By means of this, the coldneſs of the wind is abated. But if it continue to blow in the ſame direction, it will come, by degrees, to paſs over a ſurface already cooled, and will ſuffer no longer any abatement of its own keenneſs. Thus, as it advances over a large tract of land, it brings on all the ſeverity of intenſe froſt.

LET the ſame wind blow over an extenſive and deep ſea; the ſuperficial water muſt be immediately cooled to a certain degree, and the wind proportionally warmed. But the ſuperficial and colder water becoming ſpecifically heavier than the warmer water below it, deſcends; what is warmer ſupplies its place, which, as it comes to be cooled in its turn, continues to warm the air which paſſes over it, or to diminiſh its cold. This change of the ſuperficial water, and ſucceſſive aſcent of that which is warmer, and conſequent ſucceſſive abatement of coldneſs in the air, is aided by the agitation cauſed in the ſea by the mechanical action of the wind, and alſo by the motion of the tides. This will go on, and the rigour of the wind will continue to diminiſh until the whole water is ſo far cooled, that the water on the ſurface is no longer removed from the action of the wind, faſt enough to hinder it from being arreſted by froſt. Whenever the ſurface freezes, the wind is no longer warmed by the water from below, and it goes on with undiminiſhed cold.

FROM thoſe principles may be explained the ſeverity of winter froſts in extenſive continents; their mildneſs in ſmall iſlands; and the ſuperior rigour of winter in thoſe parts of North America with which we are beſt acquainted. In the north-weſt parts of Europe, the ſeverity of winter is mitigated by the weſt winds, which uſually blow in the months of November, December, and part of January.

ON the other hand, when a warm wind blows over land, it heats the ſurface, which muſt therefore ceaſe to abate the fervour of the wind. But the ſame wind blowing over water, agitates it, brings up the colder water from below, and thus is continually loſing ſomewhat of its own heat.

BUT the great power of the ſea to mitigate the heat of the wind or air paſſing over it, proceeds from the following circumſtance, that on account of the tranſparency of the ſea, its ſurface cannot be heated to a great degree by the ſun's rays; whereas the ground, ſubjected to their in-

fluence, very ſoon acquires great heat. When therefore, the wind blows over a torrid continent, it is ſoon raiſed to a heat almoſt intolerable; but during its paſſage over an extenſive ocean, it is gradually cooled; ſo that on its arrival at the fartheſt ſhore, it is again fit for reſpiration.

THOSE principles will account for the ſultry heats of large continents, in the torrid zone; for the mild climate of iſlands in the ſame latitude; and for the ſuperior warmth in ſummer which large continents, ſituated in temperate or colder zones of the earth, enjoy, when compared with that of iſlands. The heat of a climate depends not only upon the immediate effect of the ſun's rays, but on their continued operation, on the effect which they have formerly produced, and which remains for ſome time in the ground. This is the reaſon why the day is warmeſt about two in the afternoon, the ſummer warmeſt about the middle of July, and the winter coldeſt about the middle of January.

THE foreſts which cover America, and hinder the ſunbeams from heating the ground, are a great cauſe of the temperate climate of the equatorial parts. The ground, not being heated, cannot heat the air; and the leaves, which receive the rays intercepted from the ground, have not a maſs of matter ſufficient to abſorb heat enough for this purpoſe. Beſides, it is a known fact, that the vegetative power of a plant occaſions a perſpiration from the leaves in proportion to the heat to which they are expoſed; and, from the nature of evaporation, this perſpiration produces a cold in the leaf proportional to the perſpiration. Thus the effect of the leaf in heating the air in contact with it, is prodigiouſly diminiſhed. For thoſe obſervations, which throw much additional light on this curious ſubject, I am indebted to my ingenious friend, Mr. Robiſon, profeſſor of natural philoſophy in the univerſity of Edinburgh.

NOTE

NOTE XXXI. p. 255.

THE climate of Braſil has been deſcribed by two eminent naturaliſts, Piſo and Margrave, who obſerved it with a philoſophical accuracy, which, we deſiderate in the accounts of many other provinces in America. Both repreſent it as temperate and mild, when compared with the climate of Africa. They aſcribe this chiefly to the refreſhing wind which blows continually from the ſea. The air is not only cool, but chilly through the night, in ſo much that the natives kindle fires every evening in their huts. Piſo de Medicina Braſilienſi, lib. i. p. 1, &c. Margravius Hiſtor. Rerum Natural Braſiliæ, lib. viii. c. 3. p. 264. Nieuhoff, who reſided long in Braſil, confirms their deſcription. Churchill's Collection, vol. ii. p. 26. Gumilla, who reſided many years in the country, upon the river Orinoco, gives a ſimilar deſcription of the temperature of the climate there. Hiſt. de l'Orenoque, tom. i. p. 26. P. Acugna felt a very conſiderable degree of cold in the countries on the banks of the river Amazons. Relat. vol. ii. p. 56. M. Biet, who lived a conſiderable time in Cayenne, gives a ſimilar account of the temperature of that climate, and aſcribes it to the ſame cauſe. Voyage de la France, Equinox, p. 330. Nothing can be more different from theſe deſcriptions than that of the burning heat of the African coaſt given by M. Adanſon. Voyage to Senegal, paſſim.

THE moſt obvious and probable cauſe of this ſuperior degree of cold, towards the ſouthern extremity of America, ſeems to be the form of the continent there. Its breadth gradually decreaſes as it ſtretches from St. Antonio ſouthwards, and from the bay of St. Julian to the Straits of Magellan its dimenſions are much contracted. On the eaſt and weſt ſides, it is waſhed by the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. From its ſouthern point it is probable that an open ſea ſtretches to the Antartic pole. In whichever of theſe directions the wind blows, it is cooled before it approaches the Magellanic regions, by paſſing over a vaſt body of water,

nor is the land there of ſuch extent that it can recover any conſiderable degree of heat in its progreſs over it. Theſe circumſtances concur in rendering the temperature of the air in this diſtrict of America, more ſimilar to that of an inſular, than to that of a continental climate, and hinder it from acquiring the ſame degree of ſummer heat, with places in Europe and Aſia, in a correſponding northern latitude. The north wind is the only one that reaches this part of America, after blowing over a great continent. But from an attentive ſurvey of its poſition, this will be found to have a tendency, rather to diminiſh than augment the degree of heat. The ſouthern extremity of America is properly the termination of the immenſe ridge of the Andes, which ſtretches nearly in a direct line from north to ſouth, through the whole extent of the continent. The moſt ſultry regions in South-America, Guiana, Braſil, Paraguay, and Tucuman, lie many degrees to the eaſt of the Magellanic regions. The level country of Peru, which enjoys the tropical heats, is ſituated conſiderably to the weſt of them. The north wind then, though it blows over land, does not bring to the ſouthern extremity of America, an increaſe of heat collected in its paſſage over torrid regions, but before it arrives there, it muſt have ſwept along the ſummits of the Andes, and come impregnated with the cold of that frozen region.

NOTE XXXII. p. 256.

TWO French frigates were ſent upon a voyage of diſcovery in the year 1739. In latitude 44° ſouth, they began to feel a conſiderable degree of cold. In latitude 48°, they met with iſlands of floating ice. Hiſtoire des Navigations aux Terres Auſtrales, tom. ii. 256, &c. Dr. Halley fell in with ice in latitude 59°. Id. tom. i. p. 47. Commodore Byron, when on the coaſt of Patagonia, latitude 50° 33′ ſouth, on the fifteenth of December, which is midſummer in that part of the globe, the twenty-firſt of December being the longeſt day there, compares the climate to that of England in the middle of winter. Voyages by Hawkeſworth,

worth, i. 25. Mr. Banks having landed at Terra del Fuego in the Bay of Good Succeſs, latitude 55°, on the ſixteenth of January, which correſponds to the month of July in our hemiſphere, two of his attendants died in one night of extreme cold, and all the party were in the moſt imminent danger of periſhing. Id. ii. 51, 52. By the fourteenth of March, correſponding to September in our hemiſphere, winter was ſet in with rigour, and the mountains were covered with ſnow. Ibid. 72.

NOTE XXXIII. p. 258.

M. CONDAMINE is one of the lateſt and moſt accurate obſervers of the interior ſtate of South-America. "After deſcending from the Andes (ſays he) one beholds a vaſt and uniform proſpect of water and verdure, and nothing more. One treads upon the earth, but does not ſee it; as it is ſo entirely covered with luxuriant plants, weeds, and ſhrubs, that it would require a conſiderable degree of labour to clear it, for the ſpace of a foot. Relation abregé d'un Voyage, &c. p. 48. One of the ſingularities in the foreſts is a ſort of oſiers, or withs, called *bejucos* by the Spaniards, and *lianes* by the French, and *nibbees* by the Indians, which are uſually employed as ropes in America. This plant twiſts about the trees which it meets with, and riſing above their higheſt branches, its tendrils deſcends perpendicularly, ſtrike into the ground, take root, riſe up around another tree, and thus mount and deſcend alternately. Other tendrils are carried obliquely by the wind, or ſome accident, and form a confuſion of interwoven cordage, which reſembles the rigging of a ſhip. Bancroft, Nat. Hiſt. of Guiana, 99. Theſe withs are often as thick as the arm of a man. Ib. p. 75. M. Bouguer's account of the foreſts in Peru perfectly reſembles this deſcription. Voyage au Peru, p. 16. Oviedo gives a ſimilar deſcription of the foreſts in other parts of America. Hiſt. lib. ix. p. 144. D. The country of the Moxos is ſo much overflowed, that they are obliged to reſide on the ſummit of ſome riſing ground during

during ſome part of the year, and have no communication with their countrymen at any diſtance. Lettres Edifiantes, tom. x. p. 187. Garcia gives a full and juſt deſcription of the rivers, lakes, woods, and marſhes in thoſe countries of America which lie between the tropics. Origen de los Indios, lib. ii. c. 5. §. 4, 5. The incredible hardſhips to which Gonzalez Pizarro was expoſed in attempting to march into the country to the eaſt of the Andes, gives a very ſtriking idea of that part of America in its original uncultivated ſtate. Garcil. de la Vega, Royal. Comment. of Peru, part ii. book iii. c. 2—5.

NOTE XXXIV. p. 260.

THE animals of America ſeem not always to have been of a ſize inferior to thoſe in other quarters of the globe. Near the banks of the Ohio, a conſiderable number of bones of an immenſe magnitude have been found. The place where this diſcovery has been made lies about one hundred and ninety miles below the junction of the river Scioto with the Ohio. It is about four miles diſtant from the banks of the latter, on the ſide of the marſh called the Great Salt Lick. The bones lie on vaſt quantities about five or ſix feet under ground, and the ſtratum is viſible in the bank on the edge of the Lick. *Journal of Colonel George Croglan, MS. penes me.* This ſpot ſeems to be accurately laid down by Evans in his map. Theſe bones muſt have belonged to animals of enormous bulk, and naturaliſts being acquainted with no living creature of ſuch ſize, were at firſt inclined to think that they were mineral ſubſtances. Upon receiving a greater number of ſpecimens from various parts of the earth, and after inſpecting them more narrowly, they are now allowed to be the bones of an animal. As the elephant is the largeſt known quadruped, and the tuſks which were found nearly reſembled, both in form and quality, the tuſks of an elephant, it was concluded that the carcaſes depoſited on the Ohio were of that ſpecies. But Dr. Hunter, one of the

the perſons of our age beſt qualified to decide with reſpect to this point, having accurately examined ſeveral parcels of tuſks, and grinders, and jaw-bones, ſent from the Ohio to London, gives it as his opinion, that they did not belong to an elephant, but to ſome huge carnivorous animal of an unknown ſpecies. Phil. Tranſact. vol. lviii. p. 34. Bones of the ſame kind, and as remarkable for their ſize, have been found near the mouths of the great rivers, Oby, Jeniſeia, and Lena, in Siberia. *Stralhrenberg, Deſcript. of north and eaſt Parts of Europe and Aſia*, p. 402, &c. The elephant ſeems to be confined in his range to the torrid zone, and never multiplies beyond it. In ſuch cold regions as thoſe bordering on the frozen ſea, he could not live. The exiſtence of ſuch large animals in America might open a wide field for conjecture. The more we contemplate the face of nature, and conſider the variety of her productions, the more we muſt be ſatisfied that aſtoniſhing changes have been made in the terraqueous globe by convulſions and revolutions, of which no account is preſerved in hiſtory.

NOTE XXXV. p. 261.

THIS degeneracy of the domeſtic European animals in America ought to be imputed partly to each of theſe cauſes. In the Spaniſh ſettlements, which are ſituated either within the torrid zone, or in countries bordering upon it, the increaſe of heat, and diverſity of food, prevent ſheep and horned cattle from attaining the ſame ſize as in Europe. They ſeldom become ſo fat, and their fleſh is not ſo juicy, or of ſuch delicate flavour. In North-America, where the climate is more favourable, and ſimilar to that of Europe, the quality of the graſſes which ſpring up naturally in their paſture-grounds is not good. Mitchell, p. 151. Agriculture is ſtill ſo much in its infancy, that artificial food for cattle is not raiſed in any quantity. During a winter, long in many provinces, and rigorous in all, no proper care is taken of their cattle. The general treatment of their horſes and horned cattle is injudicious and harſh in all the

Engliſh

Engliſh colonies. Theſe circumſtances contribute more, perhaps, than any thing peculiar in the quality of the climate, to the degeneracy of breed in the horſes, cows, and ſheep, in moſt of its provinces.

NOTE XXXVI. p. 261.

IN the year 1518, the iſland of Hiſpaniola was afflicted with a dreadful viſitation of thoſe deſtructive inſects, the particulars of which Herrera deſcribes, and mentions a ſingular inſtance of the ſuperſtition of the Spaniſh planters. After trying various methods of extermiating the ants, they reſolved to implore protection of the ſaints, but as the calamity was new, they were at a loſs to find out the ſaint who could give them the moſt effectual aid. They caſt lots in order to diſcover the patron whom they ſhould invoke. The lots decided in favour of St. Saturninus. They celebrated his feſtival with great ſolemnity, and immediately, adds the hiſtorian, the calamity began to abate. Herrera, dec. 2. lib. iii. c. 15. p. 107.

NOTE XXXVII. p. 263.

THE author of Recherches Philoſophiques ſur les Americains ſuppoſes this difference in heat to be equal to twelve degrees, and that a place thirty degrees from the equator in the old continent, is as warm as one ſituted eighteen degrees from it in America, tom. i. p. 11. Dr. Mitchell, after obſervations carried on during thirty years, contends that the difference is equal to fourteen or fifteen degrees of latitude. Preſent State, &c. p. 257.

NOTE XXXVIII. p. 263.

JANUARY 3d, 1765, Mr. Bertram, near the head of St. John's river in Eaſt Florida, obſerved a froſt ſo intenſe, that in one night, the ground was frozen an inch thick upon the banks of the river. The limes, citrons, and banana trees, at St. Auguſtine were deſtroyed.

Bertram's

Bertram's Journal, p. 20. Other inſtances of the extraordinary operations of cold in the ſouthern provinces of North-America are collected by Dr. Mitchell. Preſent State, p. 206, &c. February 7th, 1747, the froſt at Charleſtown was ſo intenſe, that a perſon having carried two quart bottles of hot water to bed, in the morning they were ſplit to pieces, and the water ſolid lumps of ice. In a kitchen where there was a fire, the water in a jar, in which there was a large live eel, was frozen to the bottom. Almoſt all the orange and olive trees were deſtroyed. Deſcription of South-Carolina, 8vo. Lond. 1761.

NOTE XXXIX. p. 264.

A Remarkable inſtance of this occurs in Dutch Guiana, a country every where level, and ſo low, that during the rainy ſeaſons it is uſually covered with water near two feet in height. This renders the ſoil ſo rich, that on the ſurface, for twelve inches in depth, it is a ſtratum of perfect manure, and as ſuch has been tranſported to Barbadoes. On the banks of the Eſſequebo, thirty crops of ratoon canes have been raiſed ſucceſſively, whereas in Weſt-Indian iſlands more than two is never expected. The expedients by which the planters endeavour to diminiſh this exceſſive fertility of ſoil are various. Bancroft, Nat. Hiſt. of Guiana, p. 10, &c.

NOTE XL. p. 274.

MULLER ſeems to have believed, without ſufficient evidence, that the Cape had been doubled, tom. i. p. 11, &c. and the Imperial Academy of St. Peterſburgh give ſome countenance to it, by the manner in which *Tſchukotſkoi-noſs* is laid down in their charts. But I am aſſured, from undoubted authority, that no Ruſſian veſſel has ever ſailed round that cape, and as the country of *Tſchutki* is not ſubject to the Ruſſian empire, it is very imperfectly known.

NOTE

NOTE XLI. p. 276.

WERE this the place for entering into a long and intricate geographical diſquiſition, many curious obſervations might ariſe from comparing the accounts of the two Ruſſian voyages, and the charts of their reſpective navigations. One remark is applicable to both. We cannot rely with abſolute certainty on the poſition which they aſſign to ſeveral of the places which they viſited. The weather was ſo extremely foggy, that they ſeldom ſaw the ſun or ſtars, and the poſition of the iſlands and ſuppoſed continents was commonly determined by reckoning, not by obſervation. Beering and Tſchirikow proceeded much farther towards the eaſt than Krenitzin. The land diſcovered by Beering, which he imagined to be part of the American continent, is in the 236th degree of longitude from the firſt meridian in the iſle of Ferro, and in 58° 28″ of latitude. Tſchirikow came upon the ſame coaſt in longit. 241°, lat. 56°. Muller, i. 248, 249. The former muſt have advanced 60 degrees from the port of Petropawlowſka, from which he took his departure, and the latter 65 degrees. But from the chart of Krenitzin's voyage, it appears that he did not ſail farther towards the eaſt than the 280th degree, and only 32 degrees from Petropawlowſka. In 1741, Beering and Tſchirikow, both in going and returning, held a courſe which was moſtly to the ſouth of that chain of iſlands which they diſcovered, and obſerving the mountainous and rugged aſpect of the head-lands which they deſcried towards the north, they ſuppoſed them to be promontories belonging to ſome part of the American continent, which, as they fancied, ſtretched as far ſouth as the latitude 56. In this manner they are laid down in the chart publiſhed by Muller, and likewiſe in a manuſcript chart drawn by a mate of Beering's ſhip, communicated to me by Mr. Profeſſor Robiſon. But in 1769, Krenitzin, after wintering in the iſland Alaxa, ſtood ſo far towards the north in his return, that his courſe lay through the middle of what they had ſuppoſed to be a continent, which he found to be an open

ſea,

ſea, and that they had miſtaken rocky iſles for the headlands of a continent. It is probable, that the countries diſcovered in 1741, towards the eaſt, do not belong to the American continent, but are only a continuation of the chain of iſlands. From the extreme ſummer cold of all thoſe iſles, one is led to conjecture that no large continent lies very near to them. The number of volcanos in this region of the globe is remarkable. There are ſeveral in Kamſchatka, and not one of the iſlands, great or ſmall, as far as the Ruſſian navigation extends, is without them. Many are actually burning, and the mountains in all bear marks of having been once in a ſtate of eruption. Were I diſpoſed to admit ſuch conjectures as have found place in other inquiries concerning the peopling of America, I might ſuppoſe that this part of the earth, having ſuffered violent convulſions from earthquakes and volcanos, an iſthmus, which may have formerly united Aſia to America, has been broken, and formed into a cluſter of iſlands by the ſhock.

It is ſingular, that at the very time the Ruſſian navigators were attempting to make diſcoveries in the north-weſt of America, the Spaniards were proſecuting the ſame deſign from another quarter. In 1769, two ſmall veſſels ſailed from Loretto in California to explore the coaſts of the country to the north of that peninſula. They advanced no farther than the port of Monte-Rey in latitude 36. But, in ſeveral ſucceſſive expeditions fitted out from the port of St. Blas in New Galicia, the Spaniards have advanced as far as the latitude 58. *Gazeta de Madrid*, March 19, and May 14, 1776. But as the journals of thoſe voyages have not yet been publiſhed, I cannot compare their progreſs with that of the Ruſſians, or ſhew how near the navigators of the two nations have approached to each other. It is to be hoped, that the enlightened miniſter, who has now the direction of American affairs in Spain, will not withhold this information from the public.

NOTE

NOTE XLII. p. 290.

FEW travellers have had ſuch opportunity of obſerving the natives of America, in its various diſtricts, as Don Antonio Ulloa. In a work lately publiſhed by him, he thus deſcribes the characteriſtical features of the race: "a very ſmall forehead, covered with hair towards its extremities, as far as the middle of the eye-brows; little eyes; a thin noſe, ſmall and bending towards the upper lip; the countenance broad; the ears large; the hair very black, lank, and coarſe; the limbs well turned, the feet ſmall, the body of juſt proportion; and altogether ſmooth and free from hair, until old age, when they acquire ſome beard, but never on the cheeks." Noticias Americanas, &c. p. 307. M. le Chevalier Pinto, who reſided ſeveral years in a part of America which Ulloa never viſited, gives a ſketch of the general aſpect of the Indians there. "They are all of a copper colour, with ſome diverſity of ſhade, not in proportion to their diſtance from the equator, but according to the degree of elevation of the territory which they inhabit. Thoſe who live in a high country are fairer than thoſe in the marſhy low lands on the coaſt. Their face is round, farther removed, perhaps, than that of any people from an oval ſhape. Their forehead is ſmall, the extremity of their ears far from the face, their lips thick, their noſe flat, their eyes black, or of a cheſnut colour, ſmall, but capable of diſcerning objects at a great diſtance. Their hair is always thick and ſleek, and without any tendency to curl. They have no hair on any part of their body but the head. At the firſt aſpect, a ſouthern American appears to be mild and innocent, but on a more attentive view one diſcovers in his countenance ſomething wild, diſtruſtful, and ſullen." MS. *penes me*. The two portraits, drawn by hands very different from thoſe of common travellers, have a near reſemblance.

NOTE

NOTE XLIII. p. 290.

AMAZING accounts are given of the perſevering ſpeed of the Americans. Adair relates the adventures of a Chikkaſah warrior, who run through woods and over mountains, three hundred computed miles in a day and a half and two nights. Hiſt. of Amer. Ind. 396.

NOTE XLIV. p. 294.

M. GODIN LE JEUNE, who reſided fifteen years among the Indians of Peru and Quito, and twenty years in the French colony of Cayenne, in which there is a conſtant intercourſe with the Galibis, and other tribes on the Orinoco, obſerves, that the vigour of conſtitution among the Americans is exactly in proportion to their habits of labour. The Indians, in warm climates, ſuch as thoſe on the coaſts of the South Sea, on the river of Amazons, and the river Orinoco, are not to be compared for ſtrength with thoſe in cold countries; and yet, ſays he, boats daily ſet out from Para, a Portugueſe ſettlement on the river Amazons, to aſcend that river againſt the rapidity of the ſtream, and with the ſame crew they proceed to San Pablo, which is eight hundred leagues diſtant. No crew of white people, or even of negroes, would be found equal to a taſk of ſuch perſevering fatigue, as the Portugueſe have experienced, and yet the Indians being accuſtomed to this labour from their infancy, perform it. MS. *penes me.*

NOTE XLV. p. 300.

DON ANTONIO ULLOA, who viſited a great part of Peru and Chili, the kingdom of New Granada, and ſeveral of the provinces bordering on the Mexican Gulph, while employed in the ſame ſervice with the French mathematicians during the ſpace of ten years, and who afterwards

afterwards had an opportunity of viewing the North-Americans, aſſerts, " that if we have ſeen one American, we may be ſaid to have ſeen them all, their colour and make are ſo nearly the ſame." Notic. Americanas, p. 308. A more early obſerver, Pedro de Cieça de Leon, one of the conquerors of Peru, who had likewiſe traverſed many provinces of America, affirms, that the people, men and women, although there is ſuch a multitude of tribes or nations as to be almoſt innumerable, and ſuch diverſity of climates, appear nevertheleſs like the children of one father and mother. Chronica del' Peru, parte i. c. 19. There is, no doubt, a certain combination of features, and peculiarity of aſpect, which forms what may be called a European or Aſiatic countenance. There muſt likewiſe be one that may be denominated American, common to the whole race. This may be ſuppoſed to ſtrike the traveller at firſt ſight, while the various ſhades which diſtinguiſh people, of different regions, eſcape his obſervation. But when perſons who had reſided ſo long among the Americans concur in bearing teſtimony to the ſimilarity of their appearance in every climate, we may conclude that it is more remarkable than that of any other race. See likewiſe Garcia Origen de los Indies, p. 54. 242. Torquemada Monarch. Indiana, ii. 571.

NOTE XLVI. p. 301.

M. LE CHEVALIER DE PINTO obſerves, that in the interior parts of Braſil, he had been informed that ſome perſons reſembling the white people of Darien have been found; but that the breed did not continue, and their children became like other Americans. This race, however, is but very imperfectly known. MS. *penes me.*

NOTE XLVII. p. 304.

THE teſtimonies of different travellers, concerning the Patagonians, have been collected and ſtated with a conſiderable degree of accuracy by the author of Recherches Philoſophiques, &c. tom. i. 281, &c.

iii. 181, &c. Since the publication of his work, ſeveral navigators have viſited the Magellanic regions, and, like their predeceſſors, differ very widely in their accounts of its inhabitants. By Commodore Byron and his crew, who ſailed through the Straits in 1764, the common ſize of the Patagonians was eſtimated to be eight feet, and many of them much taller. Phil. Tranſact. vol. lvii. p. 78. By Captains Wallis and Carteret, who actually meaſured them in 1766, they were found to be from ſix feet to ſix feet five and ſeven inches in height. Phil. Tranſ. vol. lx. p. 22. Theſe ſeem to have been the very people whoſe ſize had been ſo much over-rated in the year 1764; for ſeveral of them had beads and red baize of the ſame kind with what had been put aboard Captain Wallis's ſhip, and he naturally concluded that they had got theſe from Mr. Byron. Hawkeſw. i. In 1767 they were again meaſured by M. Bougainville, whoſe account agrees nearly with that of Captain Wallis. Voy. 129. To theſe I ſhall add a teſtimony of great weight. In the year 1762, Don Bernardo Ibagnez de Echavarri accompanied the Marquis de Valdelirios to Buenos Ayres, and reſided there ſeveral years. He is a very intelligent author, and his reputation for veracity unimpeached among his countrymen. In ſpeaking of the country towards the ſouthern extremity of America, "By what Indians," ſays he, "is it poſſeſſed? Not certainly by the fabulous Patagonians, who are ſuppoſed to occupy this diſtrict. I have from many eye-witneſſes, who have lived among thoſe Indians, and traded much with them, a true and accurate deſcription of their perſons. They are of the ſame ſtature with Spaniards. I never ſaw one who roſe in height two *varas* and two or three inches," *i. e.* about 80 or 81. 332 inches Engliſh, if Echavarri makes his computation according to the *vara* of Madrid. This agrees nearly with the meaſurement of Captain Wallis. Reyno Jeſuitico, 238. Mr. Falkner, who reſided as a miſſionary forty years in the ſouthern parts of America, ſays, that "the Patagonians, or Puelches, are a large-bodied people; but I never heard of that gigantic race which others have mentioned, though I have ſeen perſons of all the different tribes of ſouthern Indians." Introd. p. 26.

NOTE

NOTE XLVIII. p. 308.

ANTONIO SANCHEZ RIBEIRO, a learned and ingenious phyſician, publiſhed a diſſertation in the year 1765, in which he endeavours to prove, that this diſeaſe was not introduced from America, but took its riſe in Europe, and was brought on by an epidemical and malignant diſorder. Did I chuſe to enter into a diſquiſition on this ſubject, which I ſhould not have mentioned, if it had not been intimately connected with this part of my inquiries, it would not be difficult to point out ſome miſtakes with reſpect to the facts upon which he founds, as well as ſome errors in the conſequences which he draws from them. The rapid communication of this diſeaſe from Spain over Europe, ſeems to reſemble the progreſs of an epidemic, rather than that of a diſeaſe tranſmitted by infection. The firſt mention of it is in the year 1493, and before the year 1497 it had made its appearance in moſt countries of Europe, with ſuch alarming ſymptoms as rendered it neceſſary for the civil magiſtrate to interpoſe, in order to check its career.

NOTE XLIX. p. 311.

THE people of Otaheite have no denomination for any number above two hundred, which is ſufficient for their tranſactions, Voyages, by Hawkeſworth, ii. 228.

NOTE L. p. 317.

AS the view which I have given of rude nations is extremely different from that exhibited by very reſpectable authors, it may be proper to produce ſome of the many authorities on which I found my deſcription. The manners of the ſavage tribes in America have never been viewed by perſons more capable of obſerving them with diſcernment, than the philoſophers employed by France and Spain, in the

year 1735, to determine the figure of the earth. M. Bouguer d'Antonio Ulloa, and D. George Juan, reſided long among the natives of the leaſt civilized provinces in Peru. M. de la Condamine had not only this opportunity for obſervation, but, in his voyage down the Maragnon, he had acceſs to inſpect the ſtate of the various nations ſeated on its banks, in its vaſt courſe acroſs the continent of South America There is a wonderful reſemblance in their repreſentation of the character of the Americans. "They are all extremely indolent," ſays M. Bouguer, "they are ſtupid, they paſs whole days ſitting in the ſame place, without moving, or ſpeaking a ſingle word. It is not eaſy to deſcribe the degree of their indifference for wealth, and all its advantages. One does not well know what motive to propoſe to them, when one would perſuade them to perform any ſervice. It is vain to offer them money; they anſwer, that they are not hungry." Voyage au Perou, p. 102. If one conſiders them as men, the narrowneſs of their underſtanding ſeems to be incompatible with the excellence of the ſoul. Their imbecility is ſo viſible, that one can hardly form an idea of them different from what one has of the brutes. Nothing diſturbs the tranquillity of their ſouls, equally inſenſible to diſaſters and to proſperity. Though half-naked, they are as contented as a monarch in his moſt ſplendid array. Riches do not attract them in the ſmalleſt degree, and the authority or dignities to which they may aſpire, are ſo little the objects of their ambition, that an Indian will receive with the ſame indifference the office of a judge (Alcalde) or that of a hangman, if deprived of the former and appointed to the latter. Nothing can move or change them. Intereſt has no power over them, and they often refuſe to perform a ſmall ſervice, though certain of a great recompence. Fear makes no impreſſion upon them, and reſpect as little. Their diſpoſition is ſo ſingular, that there is no method of influencing them, no means of rouzing them from that indifference, which is proof againſt all the endeavours of the wiſeſt perſons; no expedient that can induce them to abandon that groſs ignorance, or lay aſide that careleſs negligence, which diſconcert the prudence and diſappoint the care of ſuch as are attentive to their wel-

fare. Voyage de Ulloa, tom. i. 335, 356. Of thoſe ſingular qualities he produces many extraordinary inſtances, p. 336—347. "Inſenſibility," ſays M. de la Condamine, "is the baſis of the American character. I leave others to determine, whether this ſhould be dignified with the name of apathy, or diſgraced with that of ſtupidity. It ariſes, without doubt, from the ſmall number of their ideas, which do not extend beyond their wants. Gluttons even to voracity, when they have wherewithal to ſatisfy their appetite. Temperate, when neceſſity obliges them, to ſuch a degree that they can endure want without ſeeming to deſire any thing. Puſillanimous and cowardly to exceſs, unleſs when they are rendered deſperate by drunkenneſs. Averſe to labour, indifferent to every motive of glory, honour, or gratitude; occupied entirely by the object that is preſent, and always determined by it alone, without any ſolicitude about futurity; incapable of foreſight or of reflection; abandoning themſelves, when under no reſtraint, to a puerile joy, which they expreſs by friſking about, and immoderate fits of laughter; without object or deſign, they paſs their life without thinking, and grow old without advancing beyond childhood, of which they retain all the defects. If this deſcription were applicable only to the Indians in ſome provinces of Peru, who are ſlaves in every reſpect but the name, one might believe, that this degree of degeneracy was occaſioned by the ſervile dependence to which they are reduced; the example of the modern Greeks being proof how far ſervitude may degrade the human ſpecies. But the Indians in the miſſions of the Jeſuits, and the ſavages who ſtill enjoy unimpaired liberty, being as limited in their faculties, not to ſay as ſtupid as the other, one cannot obſerve, without humiliation, that man, when abandoned to ſimple nature, and deprived of the advantages reſulting from education and ſociety, differs but little from the brute creation." Voyage de la Riv. de Amaz. 52, 53. M. de Chanvalon, an intelligent and philoſophical obſerver, who viſited Martinico in 1751, and reſided there ſix years, gives the following deſcription of the Caraibs. "It is not the red colour of their complexion, it is not the ſingularity of their features, which conſtitutes the chief difference between them

them and us. It is their exceſſive ſimplicity; it is the limited degree of their faculties. Their reaſon is not more enlightened or more provident than the inſtinct of brutes. The reaſon of the moſt groſs peaſants, that of the negroes brought up in the parts of Africa moſt remote from intercourſe with Europeans, is ſuch that we diſcover appearances of intelligence, which, though unfolded, is capable of increaſe. But of this the underſtanding of Caraibs ſeems to be hardly ſuſceptible. If ſound philoſophy and religion did not afford us their light, if we were to decide according to the firſt impreſſion which the view of that people makes upon the mind, we ſhould be diſpoſed to believe that they do not belong to the ſame ſpecies with us. Their ſtupid eyes are the true mirrour of their ſouls; it appears to be without functions. Their indolence is extreme; they have never the leaſt ſolicitude about the moment which is to ſucceed that which is preſent." Voyage a la Martinique, p. 44, 45, 51. M. de la Borde, Tertre, and Rochefort, confirm this deſcription. "The characteriſtics of the Californians," ſays P. Venegas, "as well as of all the other Indians, are ſtupidity and inſenſibility; want of knowledge and reflection; inconſtancy, impetuoſity, and blindneſs of appetite; and exceſſive ſloth, and abhorrence of all labour and fatigue; an exceſſive love of pleaſure and amuſement of every kind, however trifling or brutal; puſillanimity; an, in fine, a moſt wretched want of every thing which conſtitutes the real man, and renders him rational, inventive, tractable, and uſeful to himſelf and ſociety. It is not eaſy for Europeans, who never were out of their own country, to conceive an adequate idea of thoſe people; for, even in the leaſt frequented corners of the globe, there is not a nation ſo ſtupid, of ſuch contracted ideas, and ſo weak both in body and mind, as the unhappy Californians. Their underſtanding comprehends little more than what they ſee; abſtract ideas, and much leſs a chain of reaſoning, being far beyond their power; ſo that they ſcarce ever improve their firſt ideas, and theſe are in general falſe, or at leaſt inadequate. It is in vain to repreſent to them any future advantages which will reſult to them from doing or abſtaining from

this or that particular immediately preſent; the relation means and ends being beyond the ſtretch of their faculties. Nor have they the leaſt notion of purſuing ſuch intentions as will procure themſelves ſome future good, or guard them againſt future evils. Their will is proportional to their faculties, and all their paſſions move in a very narrow ſphere. Ambition they have none, and are more deſirous of being accounted ſtrong than valiant. The objects of ambition with us, honour, fame, reputation, titles, poſts, and diſtinctions of ſuperiority, are unknown among them; ſo that this powerful ſpring of action, the cauſe of ſo much ſeeming good and real evil in the world, has no power here. This diſpoſition of mind, as it gives them up to an amazing languor and laſſitude, their lives fleeting away in a perpetual inactivity and deteſtation of labour, ſo it likewiſe induces them to be attracted by the firſt object which their own fancy, or the perſuaſion of another, places before them; and at the ſame time renders them as prone to alter their reſolutions with the ſame facility. They look with indifference upon any kindneſs done them; nor is even the bare remembrance of it to be expected from them. In a word, the unhappy mortals may be compared to children, in whom the developement of reaſon is not completed. They may indeed be called a nation who never arrive at manhood." Hiſt. of Californ. Engl. Tranſl. i. 64, 67. Mr. Ellis gives a ſimilar account of the want of foreſight and inconſiderate diſpoſition of the people adjacent to Hudſon's Bay. Voyage, p. 194, 195.

THE incapacity of the Americans is ſo remarkable, that negroes from all the different provinces of Africa are obſerved to be more capable of improving by inſtruction. They acquire the knowledge of ſeveral particulars which the Americans cannot comprehend. Hence the negroes, though ſlaves, value themſelves as a ſuperior order of beings, and look down upon the Americans with contempt, as void of capacity and of rational diſcernment. Ulloa Notic. Americ. 322, 323.

NOTE

NOTE LI. p. 322.

I HAVE obſerved, p. 297. that, for the ſame reaſon, they never attempt to rear children who are feeble, diſtorted, or defective in their make. So deeply were both theſe ideas imprinted in the minds of the Americans, that the Peruvians, a civilized people, when compared with the barbarous tribes whoſe manners I am deſcribing, retained them; and even their intercourſe with the Spaniards has not been able to root them out. When twins are born in any family, it is ſtill conſidered as an ominous event, and the parents have recourſe to rigorous acts of mortification, in order to avert the calamities with which they are threatened. When a child is born with any deformity, they will not, if they can poſſibly avoid it, bring it to be baptized, and it is with difficulty they can be brought to rear it. Arriaga Extirpac. de la Idolat. del Peru, p. 32, 33.

NOTE LII. p. 325.

THE number of the fiſh in the rivers of South America is ſo extraordinary, as to merit particular notice. "In the Maragnon," ſays P. Acugna, "fiſh are ſo plentiful, that, without any art, they may take them with their hands." p. 138. "In the Orinoco," ſays P. Gumilla, "beſides an infinite variety of other fiſh, tortoiſes or turtle abound in ſuch numbers, that I cannot find words to expreſs it. I doubt not but that ſuch as read my account will accuſe me of exaggeration: but I can affirm, that it is as difficult to count them, as to count the ſands on the banks of that river. One may judge of their number by the amazing conſumption of them; for all the nations contiguous to the river, and even many who are at a diſtance, flock thither at the ſeaſon of breeding, and not only find ſuſtenance during that time, but carry off vaſt quantities both of the turtles and of their eggs, &c." Hiſt. de l'Orenoque, ii. c. 22. p. 59. M. de la Condamine confirms their accounts, p. 159.

NOTE

NOTE LIII. p. 326.

PISO deſcribes two of theſe plants, the *Cururuape*, and the *Guajana-Timbo*. It is remarkable, that though they have this fatal effect upon fiſhes, they are ſo far from being noxious to the human ſpecies, they are uſed in medicine with ſucceſs. Piſo, lib. iv. c. 88. Bancroft mentions another, the *Hiarree*, a ſmall quantity of which is ſufficient to inebriate all the fiſh to a conſiderable diſtance, ſo that in a few minutes they float motionleſs on the ſurface of the water, and are taken with eaſe. Nat. Hiſt. of Guiana, p. 106.

NOTE LIV. p. 328.

REMARKABLE inſtances occur of the calamities which rude nations ſuffer by famine. Alvar Nugnez Cabeca de Vaca, one of the moſt gallant and virtuous of the Spaniſh adventurers, reſided almoſt nine years among the ſavages of Florida. They were unacquainted with every ſpecies of agriculture. Their ſubſiſtence was poor and precarious. "They live chiefly," ſays he, "upon roots of different plants, which they procure with great difficulty, wandering from place to place in ſearch of them. Sometimes they kill ſome game, ſometimes they catch fiſh, but in ſuch ſmall quantities, that their hunger is ſo extreme as compels them to eat ſpiders, the eggs of ants, worms, lizards, ſerpents, a kind of unctuous earth, and I am perſuaded, that if in this country there were any ſtones, they would ſwallow theſe. They preſerve the bones of fiſhes and ſerpents, which they grind into powder, and eat. The only ſeaſon when they do not ſuffer much from famine, is when a certain fruit, which he calls *Tunas*, is ripe. They are ſometimes obliged to travel far from their uſual place of reſidence, in order to find them." Naufragias, c. xviii. p. 20, 21, 22. In another place, he obſerves that they are frequently reduced to paſs two or three days without food, c. xxiv. p. 27.

NOTE LV. p. 330.

M. FIRMIN has given an accurate deſcription of the two ſpecies of manioc, with an account of its culture,

to which he has added ſome experiments, in order to aſcertain the poiſonous qualities of the juice extracted from that ſpecies which he calls the bitter caſſava. Among the Spaniards it is known by the name of *Yuca brava*. Deſcr. de Surin. tom. i. p. 66.

NOTE LVI. p. 330.

THE plantain is found in Aſia and Africa, as well as in America. Oviedo contends, that it is not an indigenous plant of the New World, but was introduced into the iſland of Hiſpaniola, in the year 1516, by father Thomas de Berlanga, and that he tranſplanted it from the Canary iſlands, whither the original ſlips had been brought from the Eaſt Indies. Oviedo, lib. viii. c. 1. But the opinion of Acoſta and other naturaliſts, who reckon it an American plant, ſeems to be better founded. Acoſta Hiſt. Nat. lib. iv. 21. It was cultivated by rude tribes in America, who had little intercourſe with the Spaniards, and who were deſtitute of that ingenuity which diſpoſes men to borrow what is uſeful from foreign nations. Gumil. iii. 186. Wafer's Voyage, p. 87.

NOTE LVII. p. 331.

IT is remarkable, that Acoſta, one of the moſt accurate and beſt informed writers concerning the Weſt Indies, affirms, that maize, though cultivated in the continent, was not known in the iſlands, the inhabitants of which had none but caſſada bread. Hiſt. Nat. lib. iv. c. 16. But P. Martyr, in the firſt book of his firſt Decad, which was written in the year 1493, upon the return of Columbus from his firſt voyage, expreſsly mentions maize as a plant which the iſlanders cultivated, and of which they made bread, p. 7. Gomara likewiſe aſſerts, that they were acquainted with the culture of maize. Hiſtor. Gener. cap. 28. Oviedo deſcribes maize without any intimation of its being a plant that was not natural to Hiſpaniola. Lib. vii. c. 1.

NOTE

NOTE LVIII. p. 337.

NEW HOLLAND, a country which formerly was little known, has lately been viſited by intelligent obſervers. It lies in a region of the globe where it muſt enjoy a very favourable climate, as it ſtretches from the 10th to the 38th degree of northern latitude. It is of great extent, and from its ſquare form muſt be much more than equal to all Europe. The people who inhabit the various parts of it appear to be of one race. They are evidently ruder than moſt of the Americans, and have made ſtill leſs progreſs in improvement and the arts of life. There is not the leaſt appearance of cultivation in any part of this vaſt region. The inhabitants are extremely few, ſo that the country appears almoſt deſolate. Their tribes are ſtill more inconſiderable than thoſe of America. They depend for ſubſiſtence, almoſt entirely, on fiſhing. They do not ſettle in one place, but roam about in queſt of food. Both ſexes go ſtark-naked. Their habitations, utenſils, &c. are more ſimple and rude than thoſe of the Americans. Voyages, by Hawkeſworth, iii. 622, &c. This, perhaps, is the country where man has been diſcovered in the earlieſt ſtage of his progreſs, and it exhibits a miſerable ſpecimen of his condition and powers in that uncultivated ſtate. If this country ſhall be more fully explored by future navigators, the compariſon of the manners of its inhabitants with thoſe of the Americans will prove an inſtructive article in the hiſtory of the human ſpecies.

NOTE LIX. p. 337.

P. GABRIEL MAREST, who travelled from his ſtation among the Illinois to Machillimakinac, thus deſcribes the face of the country: "We have marched twelve days without meeting a ſingle human creature. Sometimes we found ourſelves in vaſt meadows, of which we could not ſee the boundaries, through which there flowed many brooks and rivers, but without any path to conduct us. Sometimes we were obliged to open a paſſage acroſs thick foreſts, through buſhes, and under-

wood

wood filled with briars and thorns. Sometimes we had to paſs through deep marſhes, in which we ſunk up to the middle. After being fatigued through the day, we had the earth for our bed, or a few leaves, expoſed to the wind, the rain, and all the injuries of the air. Lettr. Edifiantes, ii. 360. Dr. Brickell, in an excurſion from North Carolina towards the mountains, A. D. 1730, travelled fifteen days without meeting with a human creature. Nat. Hiſt. of North Carolina, 389. Diego de Ordas, in attempting to make a ſettlement in South America, A.D. 1532, marched fifty days through a country without meeting one inhabitant. Herrera, dec. 5. lib. i. c. 11.

NOTE LX. p. 338.

I STRONGLY ſuſpect that a community of goods, and an undivided ſtore, are known only among the rudeſt tribes of hunters; and that as ſoon as any ſpecies of agriculture or regular induſtry is known, the idea of an excluſive right of property to the fruits of them is introduced. I am confirmed in this opinion by accounts which I have received concerning the ſtate of Property among the Indians in very different regions of America. "The idea of the natives of Braſil concerning property is, that if any perſon cultivate a field, he alone ought to enjoy the produce of it, and no other has a title to pretend to it. If an individual or a family go a-hunting or fiſhing, what is caught belongs to the individual or to the family, and they communicate no part of it to any but to their cazique, or to ſuch of their kindred as happen to be indiſpoſed. If any perſon in the village come to their hut, he may ſit down freely, and eat without aſking liberty. But this is the conſequence of their general principle of hoſpitality; for I never obſerved any partition of the increaſe of their fields, or the produce of the chace, which I could conſider as the reſult of any idea concerning a community of goods. On the contrary, they are ſo much attached to what they deem to be their property, that it would be extremely dangerous to encroach upon it. As far as I have ſeen, or can learn, there is not one tribe of Indians in South America,

America, among whom that community of goods which has been ſo highly extolled is known. The circumſtance in the government of the Jeſuits, moſt irkſome to the Indians of Paraguay, was the community of goods which they introduced. This was repugnant to their original ideas. They were acquainted with the rights of private excluſive property, and they ſubmitted with impatience to regulations which deſtroyed them." M. le Cheval. de Pinto, MS. *penes me.* Actual poſſeſſion (ſays a miſſionary who reſided ſeveral years among the Indians of the Five Nations) gives a right to the ſoil, but whenever a poſſeſſor ſees fit to quit it, another has as good right to take it as he who left it. This law, or cuſtom, reſpects not only the particular ſpot on which he erects his houſe, but alſo his planting ground. If a man has prepared a particular ſpot of ground, on which he deſigns in future to build or plant, no man has a right to incommode him, much leſs to the fruit of his labours, until it appears that he voluntary gives up his views. But I never heard of any formal conveyance from one Indian to another in their natural ſtate. The limits of every canton is circumſcribed; that is, they are allowed to hunt as far as ſuch a river on this hand, and ſuch a mountain on the other. This area is occupied and improved by individuals and their families. Individuals, not the community, have the uſe and profit of their own labours, or ſucceſs in hunting. MS. of Mr. Gideon Hawley, *penes me.*

NOTE LXI. p. 339.

THIS difference of temper between the Americans and negroes is ſo remarkable, that it is a proverbial ſaying in the French iſlands, "Regarder un ſauvage de travers, c'eſt le battre; le battre, c'eſt le tuer; battre un negre, c'eſt le nourrir." Tertre ii. 490.

NOTE LXII. p. 340.

THE deſcription of the political ſtate of the people of Cinaloa, perfectly reſembles that of the inhabitants of North America, "They have neither laws nor kings (ſays a miſſionary who reſided long

among them) to puniſh any crime. Nor is there among them, any ſpecies of authority, or political government, to reſtrain them in any part of their conduct. It is true, that they acknowledge certain Caziques, who are heads of their families or villages, but their authority appears chiefly in war, and the expeditions againſt their enemies. This authority the Caziques obtain not by hereditary right, but by their valour in war, or by the power and number of their families and relations. Sometimes they owe their pre-eminence to their eloquence in diſplaying their own exploits." Ribas Hiſtor. de las Triumph. &c. p. 11. The ſtate of the Chiquitos in South America is nearly the ſame. "They have no regular form of government, or civil life, but in matters of public concern they liſten to the advice of their old men, and uſually follow it. The dignity of Cazique is not hereditary, but conferred according to merit, as the reward of valour in war. The union among them is imperfect. Their ſociety reſembles a republic without any head, in which every man is maſter of himſelf, and, upon the leaſt diſguſt, ſeparates from thoſe with whom he ſeemed to be connected. Relacion Hiſtorical de las Miſſiones de los Chiquitos, por P. Juan Patr. Fernandez, p. 32, 33. Thus, under very different climates, when nations are in a ſimilar ſtate of ſociety, their inſtitutions and civil government aſſume the ſame form.

NOTE LXIII. p. 352.

"I HAVE known the Indians (ſays a perſon well acquainted with their mode of life) to go a thouſand miles for the purpoſe of revenge, in pathleſs woods, over hills and mountains, through huge cane ſwamps, expoſed to the extremities of heat and cold, the viciſſitude of ſeaſons, to hunger and thirſt. Such is their over-boiling revengeful temper, that they utterly contemn all thoſe things as imaginary trifles, if they are ſo happy as to get the ſcalp of the murderer, or enemy, to ſatisfy the craving ghoſts of their deceaſed relations." Adair's Hiſt. of Amer. Indians, p. 150.

NOTE

NOTE LXIV. p. 353.

IN the account of the great war between the Algonquins and Iroquois, the atchievements of Piſkaret, a famous chief of the Algonquins, performed moſtly by himſelf alone, or with one or two companions, make a capital figure. De la Potheri, i. 297, &c. Colden's Hiſt. of Five Nations, 125, &c.

NOTE LXV. p. 355.

THE life of an unfortunate leader is often in danger, and he is always degraded from the rank which he had acquired by his former exploits. Adair, p. 388.

NOTE LXVI. p. 355.

AS the ideas of the North Americans with reſpect to the mode of carrying on war, are generally known; I have founded my obſervations chiefly upon the teſtimony of the authors who deſcribe them. But the ſame maxims took place among other nations. A judicious miſſionary has given a view of the military operations of the people in Gran Chaco, in South America, perfectly ſimilar to thoſe of the Iroquois. "They are much addicted to war (ſays he) which they carry on frequently among themſelves, but perpetually againſt the Spaniards. But they may rather be called thieves than ſoldiers, for they never make head againſt the Spaniards, unleſs when they can aſſault them by ſtealth, or have guarded againſt any miſchance by ſpies, who may be called indefatigable; they will watch the ſettlements of the Spaniards for one, two, or three years, obſerving by night every thing that paſſes with the utmoſt ſolicitude, whether they may expect reſiſtance or not, and until they are perfectly ſecure of the event, they will not venture upon an attack; ſo that when they do give the aſſault, they are certain of ſucceſs, and free from all danger. Theſe

ſpies,

ſpies, in order that they may not be obſerved, will creep on all-fours like cats in the night; but if they are diſcovered, make their eſcape with much dexterity. But, although they never chuſe to face the Spaniards, if they be ſurrounded in any place, whence they cannot eſcape, they will fight with deſperate valour, and ſell their lives very dear." Lozano Deſcrip. del Gran Chaco, p. 78.

NOTE LXVII. p. 356.

LERY, who was an eye-witneſs of the proceedings of the *Toupinambos*, a Braſilian tribe, in a war againſt a powerful nation of their enemies, deſcribes their courage and ferocity in very ſtriking terms. Ego cum Gallo altero, paulo curioſius, magno noſtro periculo (ſi enim ab hoſtibus capti aut leſi fuiſſemus, devorationi fuiſſemus devoti) barbaros noſtros in militiam euntes comitari volui. Hi, numero 4000 capita, cum hoſtibus ad littus decertarunt, tanta ferocitate, ut vel rabidos & furioſos quoſque ſuperarent. Cum primum hoſtes conſpexere, in magnos atque editos ululatus perruperunt. Hæc gens adeo fera eſt & truculenta, ut tantiſper dum virium vel tantillum reſtat, continuo dimicent, fugamque nunquam capeſſant. Quod a natura illis inditum eſſe reor. Teſtor interea me, qui non ſemel, tum peditum tum equitum copias ingentes, in aciem inſtructas hic conſpexi, tanta numquam voluptate videndis peditum legionibus armis fulgentibus, quanta tum pugnantibus iſtis percuſſum fuiſſe. Lery Hiſt. Navigat. in Braſil. ap. de Bry, iii. 207, 208, 209.

NOTE LXVIII. p. 357.

THE Americans, like other fierce nations, originally cut off the heads of the enemies whom they ſlew in war, and carried them away as trophies. But, as they found theſe cumberſome in their retreat, which they always make very rapidly, and often through a vaſt extent

tent of country, they became ſatisfied with tearing off their ſcalps. This cuſtom, though moſt prevalent in North America, was not unknown among the ſouthern tribes. Lazano, p. 79.

NOTE LXIX. p. 361.

THE terms of the war-ſong ſeem to be dictated by the ſame fierce ſpirit of revenge. "I go to war to revenge the death of my brothers; I ſhall kill; I ſhall exterminate; I ſhall burn my enemies; I ſhall bring away ſlaves; I ſhall devour their heart, dry their fleſh, drink their blood; I ſhall tear off their ſcalps, and make cups of their ſkulls." Boſſu's Travels through Louiſiana, vol. i. p. 102. I am informed, by perſons on whoſe teſtimony I can rely, that as the number of people in the Indian tribes has decreaſed ſo much, almoſt none of their priſoners are put to death. It is conſidered as better policy to ſpare and to adopt them. Thoſe dreadful ſcenes which I have deſcribed occur now ſo rarely, that miſſionaries and traders who have reſided long among the Indians, never were witneſſes to them.

NOTE LXX. p. 361.

ALL the travellers who have viſited the moſt uncivilized of the American tribes, agree in this. It is confirmed by two remarkable circumſtances, which occurred in the conqueſt of different provinces. In the expedition of Narvaez into Florida in the year 1528, the Spaniards were reduced to ſuch extreme diſtreſs by famine, that in order to preſerve their own lives, they eat ſuch of their companions as happened to die. This appeared ſo ſhocking to the natives, who were accuſtomed to devour their priſoners, that it filled them with horror and indignation againſt the Spaniards. Torquemada Monarch. Ind. ii. p. 584. Naufragios de Alv. Nugnez Cabeca de Vaca, c. xiv. p. 15. During the ſiege of Mexico,

Mexico, though the Mexicans devoured with greedineſs the Spaniards and Tlaſcalans, whom they took priſoners, the utmoſt rigour of the famine which they ſuffered could not induce them to touch the dead bodies of their own countrymen. Bern. Diaz del Caſtillo Conquiſt. de la N. Eſpagna, p. 156.

NOTE LXXI. p. 363.

MANY ſingular circumſtances concerning the treatment of priſoners among the people of Braſil, are contained in the narrative of Stadius, a German Officer, in the ſervice of the Portugueſe, publiſhed in the year 1556. He was taken priſoner by the *Toupinambos*, and remained in captivity nine years. He was often preſent at thoſe horrid feſtivals which he deſcribes, and was deſtined himſelf to the ſame cruel fate with other priſoners. But he ſaved his life by extraordinary effects of courage and addreſs. De Bry, iii. p. 34, &c. M. De Lery, who accompanied M. De Villegagnon in his expedition to Braſil, in the year 1556, and who reſided a good time in that country, agrees with Stadius in every circumſtance of importance. He was frequently an eye-witneſs of the manner in which the Braſilians treated their priſoners. De Bry, iii. 210. Several ſtriking particulars omitted by them, are mentioned by a Portugueſe author. Purch. Pilgr. iv. 1294, &c.

NOTE LXXII. p. 366.

THOUGH I have followed that opinion concerning the apathy of the Americans, which appeared to me moſt rational, and ſupported by the authority of the moſt reſpectable authors, other theories have been formed with regard to it, by writers of great eminence. D. Ant. Ulloa, in a late work, contends, that the texture of the ſkin and bodily habit of the Americans is ſuch, that they are leſs ſenſible of pain than the reſt of mankind. He produces ſeveral proofs of this, from the manner in which they endure the moſt cruel chirurgical operations, &c.

&c. Noticias Americanas, p. 313, 314. The ſame obſervation has been made by ſurgeons in Braſil. An Indian, they ſay, never complains under pain, and will bear the amputation of a leg or arm without uttering a ſingle groan. MS. *penes me.*

NOTE LXXIII. p. 367.

THIS is an idea natural to all rude nations. Among the Romans, in the early periods of their commonwealth, it was a maxim that a priſoner, "tum deceſſiſſe videtur cum captus eſt." Digeſt. lib. xlix. tit. 15. c. 18. and afterwards when the progreſs of refinement rendered them more indulgent with reſpect to this article, they were obliged to employ two fictions of law to ſecure the property, and permit the return of a captive, the one by the Lex Cornelia, and the other by the Jus Poſtliminii, Heinec. Elem. Jur. Civ. ſec. ord. Pand. ii. p. 294. Among the negroes the ſame ideas prevail. No ranſom was ever accepted for a priſoner. As ſoon as one is taken in war, he is reputed to be dead; and he is ſo in effect to his country and his family. Voy. du Cheval. des Marchais, i. p. 369.

NOTE LXXIV. p. 368.

THE people of Chili, the moſt gallant and high-ſpirited of all the Americans, are the only exception to this obſervation. They attack their enemies in the open field; their troops are ranged in regular order; their battalions advance to the charge not only with courage, but with diſcipline. The North Americans, though many of them have ſubſtituted the European fire-arms in place of their own bows and arrows, ſtill adhere to their ancient maxims of war, and carry it on according to their own peculiar ſyſtem. But the Chileſe nearly reſemble the warlike nations of Europe and Aſia in their military operations. Ovalle's Relation of Chili. Church's Coll. iii. p. 71. Lozano's Hiſt. Parag. i. 144, 145.

NOTE LXXV. p. 371.

HERRERA gives a remarkable proof of this. In Yucutan, the men are ſo ſolicitous about their dreſs, that they carry about with them mirrors, probably made of ſtone, like thoſe of the Mexicans, Dec. iv. lib. iii. c. 8. in which they delight to view themſelves, but the women never uſe theſe. Dec. iv. lib. x. c. 3. He takes notice, that among the fierce tribe of the *Panches*, in the new kingdom of Granada, none but diſtinguiſhed warriors were permitted either to pierce their lips, and to wear green ſtones in them, or to adorn their heads with plumes of feathers. Dec. vii. lib. ix. c. 4. In ſome provinces of Peru, though that empire had made conſiderable progreſs in civilization, the ſtate of women was little improved. All the toil of cultivation and domeſtic work was devolved upon them, and they were not permitted to wear bracelets, or other ornaments, with which the men were fond of decking themſelves. Zarate Hiſt. de Peru, i. p. 15, 16.

NOTE LXXVI. p. 371.

I Have ventured to call this mode of anointing and painting their bodies, the *dreſs* of the Americans. This is agreeable to their own idiom. As they never ſtir abroad if they are not completely anointed; they excuſe themſelves when in this ſituation, by ſaying, that they cannot appear becauſe they are naked. Gumilla Hiſt. de l'Orenoque, i. 191.

NOTE LXXVII. p. 372.

SOME tribes in the province of Cinaloa, on the gulf of California, ſeem to be among the rudeſt people of America united in the ſocial ſtate. They neither cultivate nor ſow; they have no houſes in which they reſide. Thoſe in the inland country ſubſiſt by hunting; thoſe on the ſea-coaſt chiefly by fiſhing. Both depend upon the ſpontaneous productions of the earth, fruits, plants, and roots of various kinds. In the rainy ſeaſon, as they have no habitations to afford them ſhelter, they

gather bundles of reeds, or ſtrong graſs, and binding them together at one end, they open them at the other, and fitting them to their heads, they are covered as with a large cap, which like a pent-houſe throws off the rain, and will keep them dry for ſeveral hours. During the warm ſeaſon, they form a ſhed with the branches of trees, which protects them from the ſultry rays of the ſun. When expoſed to cold they make large fires, round which they ſleep in the open air. Hiſtoria de los triumfos de nueſtra ſanta feé entre gentes las mas barbaras, &c. por P. And. Perez de Ribas, p. 7, &c.

NOTE LXXVIII. p. 373.

THESE houſes reſemble barns. We have meaſured ſome which were a hundred and fifty paces long, and twenty paces broad. Above a hundred perſons reſide in ſome of them. Wilſon's Account of Guiana. Purch. Pilgr. vol. iv. p. 1263. Ibid. 1291. The Indian houſes, ſays M. Barrere, have a moſt wretched appearance, and are a ſtriking image of the rudeneſs of early times. Their huts are commonly built on ſome riſing ground, or on the banks of a river, huddled ſometimes together, ſometimes ſtraggling, and always without any order. Their aſpect is melancholy and diſagreeable. One ſees nothing but what is hideous and ſavage. The uncultivated fields have no gaiety. The ſilence which reigns there, unleſs when interrupted by the diſagreeable notes of birds, or cries of wild beaſts, is extremely diſmal. Relat. de la France Equin. p. 146.

NOTE LXXIX. p. 375.

SOME tribes in South America can ſend their arrows to a great diſtance, and with conſiderable force, without the aid of the bow. They make uſe of a hollow reed, about nine feet long, and an inch thick, which is called a *Sarbacane*. In it they lodge a ſmall arrow, with ſome unſpun cotton wound about its great end; this confines the air, ſo that they can blow it with aſtoniſhing rapidity,

dity, and a ſure aim, to the diſtance of above a hundred paces. Theſe ſmall arrows are always poiſoned. Fermin. Deſcr. de Surin. i. 55. Bancroft's Hiſt. of Guiana, p. 281, &c. The Sarbacane is much uſed by the Eaſt Indians.

NOTE LXXX. p. 375.

I Might produce many inſtances of this, but ſhall ſatisfy myſelf with one, taken from the Eſkimaux. "Their greateſt ingenuity (ſays Mr. Ellis) is ſhewn in the ſtructure of their bows, made commonly of three pieces of wood, each making part of the ſame arch, very nicely and exactly joined together. They are commonly of fir or larch; and as this wants ſtrength and elaſticity, they ſupply both by bracing the back of the bow, with a kind of thread, or line, made of the ſinews of their deer, and the bow-ſtring of the ſame materials. To make them draw more ſtiffly, they dip them into water, which cauſes both the back of the bow and the ſtring to contract, and conſequently gives it the greater force; and as they practiſe from their youth, they ſhoot with very great dexterity." Voyage to Hudſon's Bay, p. 138.

NOTE LXXXI. p. 376.

NECESSITY is the great prompter and guide of mankind in their inventions. There is, however, ſuch inequality in ſome parts of their progreſs, and ſome nations get ſo far the ſtart of others in circumſtances nearly ſimilar, that we muſt aſcribe this to ſome events in their ſtory, or to ſome peculiarity in their ſituation with which we are unacquainted. The people in the iſland of Otaheite, lately diſcovered in the South Sea, far excel moſt of the Americans in the knowledge and practice of the arts of ingenuity, and yet they had not invented any method of boiling water, and having no veſſel that would bear the fire, they had no more idea that water could be made hot, than that it could be made ſolid. Voyages by Hawkeſworth, i. 466. 484.

NOTE LXXXII. p. 376.

ONE of theſe boats, which could carry nine men, weighed only ſixty pounds. Goſnol Relat. des Voy. a la Virgin Rec. de Voy. au Nord. tom. v. p. 403.

NOTE LXXXIII. p. 378.

A Remarkable proof of this is produced by Ulloa. In weaving hammocks, coverlets, and the other coarſe cloaths, which they are accuſtomed to manufacture, their induſtry has diſcovered no more expeditious method, than to take up thread after thread, and after counting and ſorting them each time, to paſs the woof between them, ſo that in finiſhing a ſmall piece of theſe ſtuffs, they frequently ſpend more than two years. Voyage, i. 336. Bancroft gives the ſame deſcription of the Indians of Guiana, p. 255. According to Adair, the ingenuity and diſpatch of the North American Indians are not greater, p. 422. From one of the engravings of the Mexican paintings in Purchas, vol. iii. p. 1106. I think it probable that the people of Mexico were unacquainted with any better or more expeditious mode of weaving. A loom was an invention beyond the ingenuity of the moſt improved Americans. In all their works they advance ſo ſlowly, that one of their artiſts is two months at a tobacco-pipe with his knife, before he finiſhes it. Ibid. p. 423.

NOTE LXXXIV. p. 380.

THE article of religion in P. Lafitau's Moeurs des Sauvages, extends to 347 tedious pages in quarto.

NOTE LXXXV. p. 381.

I Have referred the reader to ſeveral of the authors who deſcribe the moſt uncivilized nations in America. Their teſtimony is uniform. That of P. Ribas concerning the people of Cinaloa, coincides with the reſt. "I was extremely attentive (ſays he), during the years I reſided among them, to aſcertain whether they were

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to be conſidered as idolators; and it may be affirmed with the moſt perfect exactneſs, that though among ſome of them there may be traces of idolatry, yet others have not the leaſt knowledge of God, or even of any falſe deity, nor pay any formal adoration to the Supreme Being, who exerciſes dominion over the world; nor have they any conception of the providence of a creator or governor, from whom they expect in the next life the reward of their good, or the puniſhment of their evil deeds. Neither do they publicly join in any act of divine worſhip." Ribas Triumphos, &c. p. 16.

NOTE LXXXVI. p. 382.

THE people of Braſil were ſo much affrightened by thunder, which is frequent and dreadful in their country, as well as in other parts of the torrid zone, that it was not only the object of religious reverence; but the moſt expreſſive name in their language for the Deity, was *Toupan*, the ſame by which they diſtinguiſhed thunder. Piſo de Medec. Braſil, p. 8. Nieuhoff. Church-Coll. ii. p. 132.

NOTE LXXXVII. p. 389.

BY the account which M. Dumont, an eye-witneſs gives of the funeral of the great chief of the Natchez, it appears, that the feelings of the perſons who ſuffered on that occaſion were very different. Some ſolicited the honour with eagerneſs; others laboured to avoid their doom, and ſeveral ſaved their lives by flying to the woods. As the Indian Bramins give an intoxicating draught to the women, who are to be burnt together with the bodies of their huſbands, which render them inſenſible of their approaching fate, the Natchez obliged their victims to ſwallow ſeveral large pills of tobacco, which produce a ſimilar effect. Mem. de Louſ. i. 227.

NOTE LXXXVIII. p. 395.

ON ſome occaſions, particularly in dances inſtituted for the recovery of perſons who are indiſpoſed, they are extremely licentious and indecent. De la Potherie

Hiſt.

Hiſt. &c. ii. p. 42. Charlev. N. Fr. iii. p. 319. But the nature of their dances is commonly ſuch as I have deſcribed.

NOTE LXXXIX. p. 397.

THE *Othomacoas*, a tribe ſeated on the banks of the Orinoco, employ for the ſame purpoſe a compoſition, which they call *Yupa*. It is formed of the ſeeds of an unknown plant, reduced to powder, and certain ſhells burnt and pulverized. The effects of this when drawn up into the noſtrils are ſo violent, that they reſemble madneſs rather than intoxication. Gumilla, i. 286.

NOTE XC. p. 399.

THOUGH this obſervation holds true among the greater part of the ſouthern tribes, there are ſome in which the intemperance of the women is as exceſſive as that of men. Bancroft's Nat. Hiſt. of Guiana, p. 275.

NOTE XCI. p. 404.

EVEN in the moſt intelligent writers concerning the manners of the Americans, one meets with inconſiſtent and inexplicable circumſtances. P. Charlevoix, who, in conſequence of the controverſy between his order and that of the Franciſcans, with reſpect to the talents and abilities of the North Americans, is diſpoſed to repreſent both their intellectual and moral qualities in the moſt favourable light, aſſerts, that they are engaged in continual negociations with their neighbours, and conduct theſe with the moſt refined addreſs. At the ſame time, he adds, "that it becomes their envoys or plenipotentiaries to exert their abilities and eloquence, for if the terms which they offer are not accepted of, they had need to ſtand on their guard. It frequently happens, that a blow with a hatchet is the only return given to their propoſitions. He is not out of danger even if he is ſo fortunate as to avoid the ſtroke, he may expect to be purſued, and if taken, to be burnt." Hiſt. N. Fr. iii. 251. Men capable of ſuch acts

acts of violence, ſeem to be unacquainted with the firſt principles upon which the intercourſe between nations is founded; and inſtead of the perpetual negociations which Charlevoix mentions, it ſeems impoſſible that there ſhould be any correſpondence whatever among them.

NOTE XCII. p. 405.

IT is a remark of Tacitus concerning the Germans, "Gaudent muneribus, ſed nec data imputant, nec acceptis obligantur." C. 21. An author who had a good opportunity of obſerving the principle which leads ſavages neither to expreſs gratitude for favours which they had received, nor to expect any return for ſuch as they beſtowed; thus explains their ideas: "If, ſay they, you give me this, it is becauſe you have no need of it yourſelf; and as for me, I never part with that which I think neceſſary to me." Memoir ſur les Galibis; Hiſt. des plantes de la Guiane Françoiſe par M. Aublet, tom. ii. p. 110.

NOTE XCIII. p. 417.

AND. BERNALDES, the contemporary and friend of Columbus, hath preſerved ſome circumſtances concerning the bravery of the Carribbees, which are not mentioned by Don Ferdinand Columbus, or the other hiſtorians of that period, whoſe works have been publiſhed. A Carribbean canoe, with four men, two women, and a boy, fell in unexpectedly with the fleet of Columbus in his ſecond voyage, as it was ſteering through their iſlands. At firſt, they were ſtruck almoſt ſtupid with aſtoniſhment at ſuch a ſtrange ſpectacle, and hardly moved from the ſpot for above an hour. A Spaniſh bark, with twenty-five men, advanced towards them, and the fleet gradually ſurrounded them, ſo as to cut off their communication with the ſhore. "When they ſaw that it was impoſſible to eſcape (ſays the hiſtorian), they ſeized their arms with undaunted reſolution, and began the attack. I uſe the expreſſion, *with undaunted reſolution*, for they were few, and beheld a vaſt number ready to aſſault them. They wounded ſeveral of the Spaniards,

Spaniards, although they had targets, as well as other defenſive armour; and even after their canoe was overſet, it was with no little difficulty and danger, that part of them were taken, as they continued to defend themſelves, and to uſe their bows with great dexterity while ſwimming in the ſea." Hiſt. de D. Fern. y D. Yſab. MSS. c. 119.

NOTE XCIV. p. 417.

A Probable conjecture may be formed with reſpect to the cauſe of the diſtinction in character between the Caribbees and the inhabitants of the larger iſlands. The former appear manifeſtly to be a ſeparate race. Their language is totally different from that of their neighbours in the large iſlands. They themſelves have a tradition, that their anceſtors came originally from ſome part of the continent, and having conquered and exterminated the antient inhabitants, took poſſeſſion of their lands, and of their women. Rochefort 384. Tertre, 360. Hence they call themſelves *Banaree*, which ſignifies a man come from beyond ſea. Labat. vi. 131. Accordingly, the Caribbees ſtill uſe two diſtinct languages, one peculiar to the men, and the other to the women. Tertre, 361. The language of the men has nothing common with that ſpoken in the large iſlands. The dialect of the women conſiderably reſembles it. Labat. 129. This ſtrongly confirms the tradition which I have mentioned. The Caribbees themſelves imagine, that they were a colony from the *Galibis*, a powerful nation of Guiana, in South America. Tertre, 361. Rochefort, 348. But as their fierce manners approach nearer to thoſe of the people in the northern continent, than to thoſe of the natives of South America; and as their language has likewiſe ſome affinity to that ſpoken in Florida, their origin ſhould be deduced rather from the former than from the latter. Labat. 128, &c. Herrera, Dec. i. lib. ix. c. 4. In their wars, they ſtill obſerve their ancient practice of deſtroying all the males, and preſerving the women either for ſervitude or for breeding.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.